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HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 111

Offered January 29, 2016

Commending the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities.

Patrons—Yancey, Price and Rasoul

WHEREAS, in 2015, the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the promotion of understanding and inclusion among all people in their schools, businesses, and communities, celebrated its 80th anniversary; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities (VCIC) traces its origins to 1935 when leaders of three different religions in Lynchburg met to discuss ways to promote harmonious relations and understanding among people of different faiths, backgrounds, and cultures; the group called itself the Lynchburg Round Table; and

WHEREAS, soon after that initial meeting, a statewide interfaith conference was organized and held on November 25, 1935; nearly 1,000 people attended the program in Lynchburg, including faith leaders from across the Commonwealth, many of whom returned home and established similar programs; and

WHEREAS, two chapters of the Round Table were formed in Norfolk and Richmond, and by 1946, those groups had become affiliated with the National Conference of Christians and Jews (NCCJ); in the following years, chapters of the Virginia Region of the NCCJ were formed in other cities; and

WHEREAS, the valuable work of the Virginia Region of the NCCJ to promote interfaith understanding increased through the years, and in 1963, the organization started an annual Humanitarian Awards Dinner; the recipients of the award have demonstrated an outstanding commitment to promoting respect and understanding among people of diverse backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, the name of the organization changed several times as its mission expanded to include members of other faiths and address important human relations issues; since 2007, the organization has been known as the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities; and

WHEREAS, the VCIC has held one-day youth seminars, summer workshops for teachers, police-community dialogues and training, programs for elementary school pupils, clergy dialogues, Holocaust education, and many other programs to assist communities in Virginia in finding common pathways to understanding and inclusion; and

WHEREAS, today, the work of the VCIC is in great demand; the group sponsors programs such as the Emerging Leaders Institute for middle and high school students, has created a Diversity in Higher Education Division and an Inclusive Workplaces Initiative, and also has fostered a Community Programs & Partnerships collaboration; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities hereby be commended on the occasion of its 80th anniversary in 2015; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Jonathan Zur, president and chief executive officer of the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities, as an expression of the House of Delegates' congratulations and admiration for its outstanding work to promote inclusion in the Commonwealth's schools, businesses, and communities.

INTRODUCED

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