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HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 142

Offered February 17, 2016

Commending Mars Hill African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.

Patron—Tyler

WHEREAS, Mars Hill African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in Wakefield traces its history to 1878, when land was donated for a church; members first gathered in a brush arbor and later moved to a nearby house to worship; and

WHEREAS, in 1879, a one-room frame church was completed and named Mars Hill African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Zion Church; the church's name comes from Mars Hill in Athens, Greece, one of the places where the Apostle Paul preached; and

WHEREAS, through the years, the members of Mars Hill A.M.E. Zion Church have been served by dedicated and inspiring leaders; 16 ministers have been the pastor of the historic church in Sussex County, faithfully tending to the needs of the congregation; and

WHEREAS, the pastors of Mars Hill A.M.E. Zion Church have been fortunate to be able to call on many dedicated elders, bishops, trustees, and preacher stewards for guidance and assistance, all of whom worked for the betterment of the church; and

WHEREAS, many changes have taken place at Mars Hill A.M.E. Zion Church since it was built; church leaders established a building fund to help pay for renovation projects, large debts have been paid, and improvements and upgrades have been made; and

WHEREAS, the leaders of Mars Hill A.M.E. Zion Church installed a brick exterior, rebuilt walls, lowered the ceiling, added bathrooms, and enlarged the vestibule; other additions to the historic church include a dining room, trustee board room, choir room, and offices; and

WHEREAS, more recent upgrades to the worship space at Mars Hill A.M.E. Zion Church include new pews, pulpit furniture, audio systems and musical instruments, and a mirror for the sanctuary; and

WHEREAS, the members of Mars Hill A.M.E. Zion Church are proudly looking to the future; the church is home to a learning and daycare center and has well-established foster grandparent, senior citizen, and couples ministries; and

WHEREAS, Mars Hill A.M.E. Zion Church's successful community outreach programs include a prayer service on Wednesdays, and the church also has served the people of Sussex County by sponsoring job fairs, health fairs, and a community resource day; and

WHEREAS, the Reverend Kenneth Zollicoffer is the current minister of Mars Hill A.M.E. Zion Church; he helped increase church membership, started video ministries and an evening Bible study class, and worked to secure recognition of the significant accomplishments of the black citizens of Sussex County during Black History Month; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That Mars Hill African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in Wakefield hereby be commended on the occasion of its 137th anniversary in 2016; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Reverend Kenneth Zollicoffer, minister of Mars Hill African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, as an expression of the House of Delegates' congratulations and admiration for its many years of service to its members and the people of Sussex County.