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## HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 211

Offered March 7, 2016

*Commending the Newport News Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism.*

Patrons—Price, Mason and Yancey

WHEREAS, the Newport News Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism was first established as the Newport News Department of Parks and Recreation by the Newport News City Council on June 1, 1941; and

WHEREAS, the new department's first priority was to organize team sports and provide activities for the region's military service members; and

WHEREAS, at its inception, the Department of Parks and Recreation oversaw the operation of a single public park at the east end of the James River Bridge; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Parks and Recreation's first major facility was the World War II Recreation Center and pool (now the Doris Miller Community Center) that was dedicated on October 7, 1945; and

WHEREAS, in 1995, the department was renamed the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism to coincide with the incorporation of the city's tourism efforts; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism has grown since its inception to include 37 public parks, five major community centers, two public golf courses, two public pools, a large tennis complex, an athletic park, a 188-site campground, 102 playgrounds, 38 picnic shelters, 35 miles of recreational trails, a 194-slip marina, five senior centers, 24 school-age program sites, 76 sports fields, a visitor information center, a public rose garden, an aeromodel field, a disc golf course, two freshwater lakes for fishing and boating, two nature discovery centers, one of the nation's largest municipal parks, and the longest public fishing pier on the East Coast, to name just a few of the department's many offerings; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism operates the nationally renowned Virginia War Museum and has preserved and now maintains and interprets a variety of historic homes and sites, including Lee Hall Mansion, the Warwick Courthouse, the J. Thomas Newsome House, the Historic Lee Hall Depot, Endview Plantation, Potter's Field, Young's Mill, Causey's Mill, the Harwood House, and numerous other historic assets, many of which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places; and

WHEREAS, the goals of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism include providing Newport News residents and guests with a wide range of opportunities to maintain physical and mental fitness, develop and express creative talents, and experience personal enjoyment; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism has expanded to include a variety of programs, facilities, and services outside of traditional parks and recreation offerings, including tourism marketing, landscaping of public areas, promoting cultural arts, conducting citywide special events, and managing animal care and sheltering; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism now provides more than 1,000 programs and activities annually, including organized youth and adult sports, instructional classes, special events, cultural performances, before and after school programs, and leisure activities for all ages, abilities, and interests; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism has received numerous awards and been recognized for its innovative and creative programming, facilities, and events, including Virginia's first drive-through holiday light show (Celebration in Lights), the Fall Festival of Folklife, the state-of-the-art Denbigh Community Center, the Downing-Gross Cultural Arts Center with its outstanding Anderson Johnson Gallery, and the nationally recognized Hollydazzle with its unique fireworks; and

WHEREAS, the quality services, activities, and programs currently provided by the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism are the result of the hard work and combined efforts of more than 200 professional full-time employees, 400 part-time and seasonal employees, and close to 1,000 dedicated volunteers; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism continues to strategically plan and provide a rich and vibrant array of attractions, activities, programs, services, and serene parks and green space for the citizens and guests of the City of Newport News and is directly responsible for enhancing the quality of life for all who live in or visit the City of Newport News; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That the Newport News Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism hereby be commended for its efforts to enhance and improve the quality of life in Newport

INTRODUCED

HR211

59 News and the Commonwealth on the occasion of its 75th anniversary; and, be it  
60 RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare copies of this resolution  
61 for presentation to the Mayor and City Council of Newport News as an expression of the House of  
62 Delegates' admiration for the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism's outstanding contributions to  
63 the community.