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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 809

Offered January 20, 2017

Commending the American Legion Auxiliary Virginia Girls State.

Patrons—Anderson, Bell, Richard P., Bloxom, Boysko, Bulova, Byron, Carr, Cline, Cole, Cox, Filler-Corn, Greason, Heretick, Herring, Hope, Hugo, Ingram, Jones, Keam, Knight, Kory, Krizek, Landes, LaRock, Lindsey, Loupassi, Minchew, Morefield, Mullin, Murphy, Orrock, Peace, Plum, Rasoul, Simon, Ware and Wright; Senators: Deeds, Ebbin, Howell, McPike, Peake, Reeves, Spruill, Stuart and Surovell

WHEREAS, the American Legion Auxiliary Virginia Girls State celebrated 70 years of developing high school girls across the Commonwealth into civic leaders, teaching them how government works, and the importance of good citizenship in 2016; and

WHEREAS, Girls State was organized as a national Americanism activity in 1937 at The American Legion Auxiliary national convention, and the program was designed to teach young women responsible citizenship and love for God and country; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Girls State was organized in 1946 and is sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Virginia, and in June 2016 the 70th session of Virginia Girls State was held at Longwood University, marking the 42nd year the school has hosted the week-long program; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Girls State is a nonpartisan program that seeks to develop civic leadership and pride in American citizenship and to instill in the attendees a sense of individual obligation to the community, state, and nation; and

WHEREAS, rising high school seniors are selected and then sponsored as delegates to attend Virginia Girls State by local American Legion Auxiliary Posts and 600 - 625 girls from across the Commonwealth attend the program each June; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Girls State is a learning experience in practical democracy and delegates are afforded the opportunity to actualize government by living and working with other leaders from across the Commonwealth while learning about the law and court system, parliamentary procedure, and Virginia political history; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Girls State delegates become citizens of one of 14 fictional cities named after a famous citizen of Virginia, organize into two political parties (Federalist and Nationalist), and then are elected to serve in offices at the city, county, and state levels of government; and

WHEREAS, speakers from all levels of government provide valuable lessons for the delegates who attend Virginia Girls State, and the attendees are fortunate to receive guidance and leadership from a highly qualified and dedicated staff who work tirelessly to provide a special and unique learning experience each summer; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Girls State is a leadership action program, designed to give attendees functional citizenship training and to impress upon them the importance of the civic responsibilities they must assume when they become adults; and

WHEREAS, while much has changed in the world political climate from the time the program was founded, the American Legion Auxiliary continues to sponsor Virginia Girls State in the belief that young citizens who are familiar with the operation of our government will be better prepared to uphold its ideals; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the American Legion Auxiliary Virginia Girls State on celebrating 70 years of developing high school girls into civic leaders and promoting real-life citizenship; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Susan Lee, director of Virginia Girls State, and Anne Starke, chair of the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Virginia Girls State Committee, as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the program's storied 70-year history of educating generations of good citizens and future leaders across the Commonwealth.

INTRODUCED

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