

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 844

Commending Hope in the Cities.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 11, 2019
Agreed to by the Senate, February 20, 2019

WHEREAS, Hope in the Cities, a nonprofit focused on interracial trust, reflection, dialogue, and action, began in 1990 as a response to the need for racial healing in Richmond; and

WHEREAS, Hope in the Cities was launched as a program of Initiatives of Change, a global organization devoted to repairing the world through justice and equity and doing away with the harmful effects of dehumanization, exclusion, hierarchy, and violence; and

WHEREAS, in 1993, Hope in the Cities sponsored a national conference called Healing the Heart of America, which for the first time publicly acknowledged Richmond's role in the slave trade; and

WHEREAS, in the 1990s Hope in the Cities launched small group dialogues on race, reconciliation, and responsibility that have, over the intervening years, involved thousands of people; and

WHEREAS, at the Hope in the Cities 1996 Metropolitan Richmond Day, hundreds of attendees wrestled with critical issues facing the Richmond area, and in 1998 the organization assisted in the development of a public dialogue process for President Clinton's Initiative on Race; and

WHEREAS, in 2001 Hope in the Cities facilitated the creation of a partnership among Richmond, Liverpool, and Benin in West Africa, in which each jurisdiction apologized for its involvement in the slave trade and committed to building a reconciliation triangle, beginning with the erection of common public statues and organization of youth exchange visits; later that year, the organization held an international forum on reconciliation and justice; and

WHEREAS, Hope in the Cities programs in the past decade have trained leaders in skill building and addressed healthy integrated public schools, including in those discussions teachers, administrators, students, parents, and the business community; and

WHEREAS, in 2007, the Hope in the Cities Richmond and Liverpool organizations worked with The Slave Trail Commission to unveil the Reconciliation Statue in Richmond, with replicas erected in Liverpool and the Republic of Benin in West Africa; and two years later saw The Slave Trail Commission complete an archeological dig at the former site of Lumpkin's Jail, one of the historical sites identified by Hope in the Cities at the first Unity Walk in 1993; and

WHEREAS, Hope in the Cities played a leading role in hosting The Trust Factor, a national forum at the University of Richmond in 2009; and after the 2010 Census, it partnered with the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities to present a program called Unpacking the 2010 Census: The New Realities of Race, Class, and Jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, two decades after its inception, Hope in the Cities continues to pursue dialogue and cultivate leadership with the Community Trustbuilding Fellowship that enables leaders to make sustainable change within the communities in which they live and work; and

WHEREAS, Hope in the Cities' model for dialogue, healing history, and building interracial partnerships has been replicated in cities across the nation, including Portland, Selma, Baltimore, Hartford, Natchez, and Dayton, as well as communities in Europe, Australia, South Africa, Brazil, and India; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Hope in the Cities for its efforts focused on interracial trust, reflection, dialogue, and action, with a focus on addressing the need for racial healing in Richmond; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Hope in the Cities as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for two decades of commitment to the betterment of Richmond and the world.

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