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## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 974

Offered February 14, 2019

*Commending the Norfolk Drug Court.*

Patrons—Jones, J.C.; Senators: Lewis and McClellan

WHEREAS, the Norfolk Drug Court, one of the oldest programs of its kind in Virginia, has helped non-violent drug offenders recover from addiction and rejoin society for more than two decades; and

WHEREAS, established in 1998, the Norfolk Drug Court was a revolutionary concept at the time, but has since inspired the formation of more than 40 similar programs throughout the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the Norfolk Drug Court is a collaboration between the Norfolk Community Services Board, the Norfolk Circuit Court, the Norfolk Commonwealth's Attorney, the Norfolk Sheriff's Office, and Norfolk Probation and Parole; Colonel Michael O'Toole of the Norfolk Sheriff's Office and the Honorable Junius Fulton III, a judge of the Norfolk Circuit Court, played vital roles in the establishment of the program; and

WHEREAS, the Norfolk Drug Court reduces recidivism and saves tens of thousands of taxpayer dollars by allowing nonviolent felony offenders who meet the criteria for psychoactive substance use disorders to plead guilty and receive intensive, supervised outpatient treatment rather than incarceration; and

WHEREAS, the Norfolk Drug Court's treatment program lasts for a minimum of 18 months and facilitates rehabilitation and recovery through individualized case management; assessment, treatment, and monitoring by a multidisciplinary staff; group and individual therapy sessions and counseling; and random screening for illicit substances; and

WHEREAS, from 1998 to 2018, 300 people graduated from the Norfolk Drug Court, accepting the opportunity to rebuild their lives and once again become responsible members of their communities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Norfolk Drug Court for its service to the community on the occasion of its 20th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Norfolk Drug Court as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the program's work to address substance abuse and change the lives of its participants for the better.

INTRODUCED

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