

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 357

Commending Charles City County.

Agreed to by the Senate, February, 14, 2019
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 19, 2019

WHEREAS, 2019 marks the 400th anniversary of the American Revolution and as one of four boroughs created pursuant to the Great Charter in 1619, Charles City County is one of the oldest political jurisdictions in the nation; and

WHEREAS, the history of Charles City County is closely entwined with the early years of the nation; originally known as Charles Cittie, and named for a future king of England, it was established by the Virginia Company in 1619 as one of the first four boroughs in the region; and

WHEREAS, at the time, the Charles City County region was home to members of the Chickahominy, Paspahegh, and Weyanoke Native American tribes, and it had been home to various other tribes for thousands of years; and

WHEREAS, Charles City County was a participant in, witness to, and a beneficiary of four major events in 1619 that shaped the future of the young nation: the meeting of the first representative legislative assembly in the New World, the arrival of the first recorded Africans to English North America, the recruitment of English women in significant numbers, and the first official English Thanksgiving in North America; and

WHEREAS, a number of Charles City County residents have ancestral ties to those Africans and English women arriving in 1619; and

WHEREAS, Captain Thomas Graves, whose descendants reside in Charles City County today, was a representative attending that first General Assembly on behalf of Smyth's Hundred; and

WHEREAS, the first official English Thanksgiving in North America took place in Charles City County at the landing of the Berkeley Hundred settlers; and

WHEREAS, after Virginia became a royal colony, the borough became Charles City Shire in 1634 and was renamed Charles City County in 1643; the Counties of Amelia, Brunswick, Dinwiddie, Prince Edward, and Prince George and the Cities of Hopewell and Petersburg were all formed from what was originally Charles City Shire; and

WHEREAS, bounded by the James River and the Chickahominy River, Charles City County has always been known for its abundant natural resources, and the area quickly became a hub for agriculture and trade; and

WHEREAS, after the Civil War, logging, fishing, and small-scale farming operations replaced many of the tobacco plantations in Charles City County; the county remains largely rural and some of its farms have been in continuous operation for 400 years; and

WHEREAS, farms in Charles City County have won national recognition for grain, wheat, and corn production yields, and farmers from Charles City County have advanced the field of agriculture by developing new technology for controlling runoff from grain production; and

WHEREAS, until 2007, the historic Charles City County Court House, built in the 1730s, was one of only five courthouses in the United States built before the Revolutionary War that was still in use for judicial purposes; and

WHEREAS, Charles City County was also home to President William Henry Harrison and President John Tyler, the ninth and tenth presidents of the United States; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Charles City County on the occasion of its 400th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Charles City County as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the county's long history and unique contributions to the Commonwealth.

ENROLLED

S357ER