

2019 SESSION

ENROLLED

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 443

Commending the Hilton Downtown Richmond.

Agreed to by the Senate, February 21, 2019
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 22, 2019

WHEREAS, in 2019, the Hilton Downtown Richmond celebrates its 10th anniversary of providing exceptional hospitality and service from inside the historic Miller & Rhoads Building on Broad Street; and

WHEREAS, on October 17, 1885, the same year that the nation's first electric trolley system debuted in Richmond, three businessmen from Pennsylvania opened the Miller, Rhoads & Gerhart dry goods store at 117 East Broad Street; the store was later renamed as Miller & Rhoads and moved to the 500 block of East Broad Street; and

WHEREAS, Miller & Rhoads prospered in the area and quickly became an upscale department store encompassing nearly half a million square feet of floor space on an entire city block; the store helped anchor downtown Richmond's retail district for decades, drawing shoppers from throughout the region; and

WHEREAS, Miller & Rhoads was the first store in Richmond to feature electric lighting, elevators, escalators, air conditioning, and underground plumbing and was known for its ornate clock on the first floor of the building, with the phrase "Meet me under the clock" becoming familiar to Richmonders planning downtown activities; and

WHEREAS, the famous Miller & Rhoads Tea Room was known as the center of Richmond's social scene, hosting fashion shows, book signings, and other events; the store also gained recognition for its elaborate holiday window displays, and thousands of children flocked to the store each Christmas to visit Santa Claus; and

WHEREAS, Miller & Rhoads opened 20 stores in Virginia and North Carolina before closing in 1990; throughout its history, the store maintained its traditional roots, even placing its elegant metal signs outside stores within shopping malls; and

WHEREAS, in 2009, the Miller & Rhoads Building reopened as the 250-room Hilton Downtown Richmond, elevating the commitment to excellence for which Miller & Rhoads was known with the prestige of the Hilton brand; the project also created 130 condominiums in the building and was the first development in the city to incorporate hotel and condominium units in the same space; and

WHEREAS, the opening of the Hilton Downtown Richmond was an important element in the revitalization of downtown Richmond, and the property has been a major contributor to the city's vibrant economy; and

WHEREAS, guests from around the world have stayed at the Hilton Downtown Richmond, enjoying the high quality of service provided by its employees, unique guest rooms, beautiful lobby with original marble floors, and nostalgic touches reminiscent of the building's past; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Department of Historic Resources has approved the installation of a Virginia Highway Marker to be placed in front of the Hilton Downtown Richmond to preserve the story of the Miller & Rhoads Building; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, the Hilton Downtown Richmond also commemorates the 100th anniversary of Hilton Hotels and Resorts, which was established in 1919 and now serves millions of guests at 570 locations in 85 countries and territories on six continents; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Hilton Downtown Richmond in the historic Miller & Rhoads Building on the occasion of its 10th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Hilton Downtown Richmond as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for its contributions to the Richmond community.

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