

2021 SPECIAL SESSION I

ENROLLED

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 594

Commending the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 27, 2021

WHEREAS, the rights of workers in the Commonwealth, the United States, and throughout the world are vital to a healthy society and the welfare of all people; and

WHEREAS, unions play an essential role in the protection and safety of the working class, the promotion of racial and social equity, and bargaining for better contracts between employers and workers; and

WHEREAS, Operation Dixie was a campaign to unionize industry workers in 12 states in the Southeast United States, including Virginia, that was organized by the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in the years after World War II from 1946 to 1953; and

WHEREAS, Operation Dixie was undertaken as part of a dual effort to consolidate wage gains won by trade unions in the Northern United States while supporting workers in the Southeast United States who had long struggled with economic inequality, segregation, and low wages; and

WHEREAS, Operation Dixie sought to raise wages in the South and transform the politics of the region by electing pro-labor candidates for public offices; the campaign focused on uniting workers of all races and genders to ensure solidarity among the workers; and

WHEREAS, Operation Dixie urged white workers to reject groups such as the Ku Klux Klan and build alliances with Black workers; because of their work, CIO strikers and organizers were the targets of violent crimes, such as beatings, lynchings, kidnappings, and shootings; and

WHEREAS, Operation Dixie set the stage for future unionization campaigns in the Commonwealth and throughout the region; and

WHEREAS, the CIO merged with the American Federation of Labor (AFL) in 1955 to form the AFL-CIO, and the organization has continued to advocate for protections and equal pay among workers of different races and genders in the Commonwealth and beyond; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations hereby be commended for Operation Dixie and its organizing efforts in Virginia; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for the organization's ongoing efforts to improve the welfare of workers throughout the Commonwealth and the United States.

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