

# 2022 SPECIAL SESSION I

INTRODUCED

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## HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 619

Offered April 6, 2022

*Commending the Grandin Theatre.*

Patrons—Rasoul, Austin, Head and McNamara

WHEREAS, the Grandin Theatre, a movie theater in Roanoke that recalls the Golden Age of Hollywood and that has been a beloved cultural institution in the region for decades, celebrates its 90th anniversary in 2022; and

WHEREAS, built by Roanoke architect John Zink, the Grandin Theatre opened its doors on March 26, 1932, for a screening of the film *Arrowsmith*, making it the first theater in the city to show talkies, or films with synchronized sound; and

WHEREAS, the Grandin Theatre delighted cinema lovers for more than 40 years before closing for the first time in 1976, at which point it became the home of the Mill Mountain Theatre, which produced shows like *The Sound of Music*, *Guys and Dolls*, and *Annie Get Your Gun* over the company's seven-year stewardship of the theater; and

WHEREAS, under Jack Andrews' subsequent ownership in the mid-1980s, the Grandin Theatre not only screened films but staged some of the leading blues musicians of the day, including John Lee Hooker, Ray Charles, and B.B. King; and

WHEREAS, from the late 1980s to November 2001, the Grandin Theatre was managed by Julie Hunsaker, who used the space to feature art house, indie, and foreign films for the enjoyment of the region's cinema aficionados; and

WHEREAS, in 2001, as the Grandin Theatre was closing for the third time, the Grandin Theatre Foundation was formed as a 501(c)(3) organization with the mission to preserve the theater as a cultural and educational resource dedicated to film and the cinematic arts in Western Virginia; and

WHEREAS, after the Grandin Theatre Foundation's successful "Save the Grandin" campaign, the Grandin Theatre reopened on October 20, 2002, and has provided its visitors with memorable movie-going experiences ever since; and

WHEREAS, as the focal point of the Grandin Road Commercial Historic District and as one of the preeminent cultural destinations in the region, the Grandin Theatre has served as both a driver of the economy and promoter of the arts throughout its existence; and

WHEREAS, through the Grandin Theatre Film Lab, Black History Month programming, and other activities, the Grandin Theatre has increased its engagement in the community in recent years; and

WHEREAS, the Grandin Theatre's current fundraising campaign, "Heart of the Main," aspires to upgrade the theater's facilities to allow for an even greater array of programming and to enhance the theater's ability to serve the Roanoke community; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That the Grandin Theatre hereby be commended on the occasion of its 90th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Ian Fortier, executive director of the Grandin Theatre, as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for the theater's history and its contributions to the Commonwealth.

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