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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 486

Offered January 11, 2023

Prefiled January 8, 2023

Commending the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Planning Committee.

Patrons—Bennett-Parker and Herring; Senator: Ebbin

WHEREAS, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Planning Committee, an organization that spearheads the City of Alexandria's annual Martin Luther King, Jr., Memorial Program, celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2023; and

WHEREAS, for the first 35 years of its existence, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Planning Committee was chaired by Alexandria civic leader and activist Alice P. Morgan, who organized the inaugural memorial program to honor the life and legacy of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in 1973; and

WHEREAS, a decade before President Ronald Reagan established a federal holiday honoring the birthday of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and nearly three decades prior to official designation of the holiday by every state, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Planning Committee convinced Charles Beatley, mayor of the City of Alexandria, to endorse a citywide memorial program on King's birthday; and

WHEREAS, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Planning Committee takes great effort to develop a diverse, interfaith, and intergenerational memorial program that exemplifies the principles and ideals of both the committee's founder, Alice P. Morgan, and the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; and

WHEREAS, over the past half-century, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Planning Committee's memorial program has featured some of Alexandria's most beloved musicians and a wide array of distinguished speakers, including local elected officials, dignitaries, faith leaders, civic leaders, activists, and journalists; and

WHEREAS, since Alice P. Morgan's tenure, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Planning Committee has been helmed by Jo J. Butler, Mabel T. Lyles, and, most recently, Rosa Byrd, who has been chair of the organization since 2016; and

WHEREAS, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Planning Committee is supported by more than a dozen volunteers who meet monthly in preparation for each year's memorial program; and

WHEREAS, many notable citizens have volunteered with the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Planning Committee over the years, including Lawrence P. "Robbie" Robinson, who is the longest serving member in the committee's history and who remains active with the committee as its official photographer; and

WHEREAS, the efforts of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Planning Committee are facilitated by many youth in the community, who serve as hosts and hostesses for the memorial program beginning in elementary school and continuing through their high school graduation, as well as various places of worship, which serve as venues for the day's activities; and

WHEREAS, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Planning Committee collaborates with the City of Alexandria and various local religious, spiritual, civic, and social organizations to bring glory to the memory of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and to foster greater appreciation for his pursuit of racial, social, and economic justice; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Planning Committee on the occasion of its 50th anniversary in 2023; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Rosa Byrd, chair of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Planning Committee, as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the organization's history and its contributions to the Commonwealth.

INTRODUCED

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