

2023 SESSION

INTRODUCED

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 633

Offered February 7, 2023

Commending Melwood.

Patrons—Bennett-Parker, Bulova, Filler-Corn, Herring, Hope, Krizek, Lopez, Maldonado, Murphy, Plum, Reid, Shin, Sickles, Sullivan, Tran and Watts; Senators: Ebbin, Favola, Howell and Surovell

WHEREAS, Melwood, a leading employer, advocate, and preferred provider for people with disabilities in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area that employs innovative strategies and programs to empower people with disabilities to live, work, and play in the community, celebrates its 60th anniversary in 2023; and

WHEREAS, Melwood was founded in 1963 by a small group of parents and community supporters in Upper Marlboro, Maryland, who decided to teach plant care to young adults with disabilities and to provide them with jobs; and

WHEREAS, known as the Melwood Horticultural Training Center in its early years, Melwood initially operated out of a surplus Army tent on seven acres of unimproved land donated by Andrews Air Force Base in Prince George's County, Maryland, cultivating plants and selling them to work sites around the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area; and

WHEREAS, in the 1970s, Melwood purchased property in Nanjemoy, Maryland, where a fully functioning farm was used as a training site for individuals with disabilities to gain skills in agriculture, farming, landscaping, and horticulture; and

WHEREAS, 25 years ago, Melwood opened Camp Accomplish, a fully inclusive summer camp serving kids with and without disabilities that today provides hundreds of kids across Maryland and the Commonwealth with day camp and overnight camp options; and

WHEREAS, in the 1980s, Melwood became one of the first nonprofit agencies to hold a contract under the expanded Javits-Wagner-O'Day Act, also known as the AbilityOne Program, one of the nation's largest providers of jobs for people who are blind or who have significant disabilities; and

WHEREAS, today, Melwood serves federal clients at more than 60 federal sites, delivering high-quality total facility management, custodial, ground keeping, and recycling services and more across Maryland, the Commonwealth, and Washington, D.C.; and

WHEREAS, Melwood provides competitive integrated employment, job placement, job training, independent life skills training, and support services to more than 2,500 people each year; and

WHEREAS, Melwood operates the Fairfax County Workforce, Innovation, and Skills Hub in Hybla Valley, a groundbreaking community-based service designed to train, upskill, and empower individuals to find employment, no matter what barriers they face; and

WHEREAS, in 2017, Melwood combined with Linden Resources in Arlington to establish one of the largest regional nonprofits dedicated to empowering people with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, Melwood's integrated workforce is composed of more than 1,400 employees, including 900 employees with disabilities, serving as a national model for a successfully integrated workforce; and

WHEREAS, today, Melwood remains unwavering in its founding vision—a world where people with disabilities are fully included in their communities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Melwood on the occasion of its 60th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Melwood as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for its history of contributions to the Commonwealth.

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