

## 2023 SESSION

ENROLLED

### SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 389

*Commending the Eagle Festival.*

Agreed to by the Senate, February 22, 2023  
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 23, 2023

WHEREAS, for 25 years, the Eagle Festival at Mason Neck State Park has celebrated the comeback of American bald eagles, a species that once neared extinction, promoted conservation, and provided educational opportunities to the community; and

WHEREAS, Mason Neck State Park was established in 1985, following a 1960s grassroots effort led by Elizabeth Hartwell and others to preserve the natural environment in the Mount Vernon area; the park encompasses 1,800 acres of land in southeast Fairfax County that is home to a diversity of plants and wildlife, including wintering tundra swans, breeding bald eagles, ospreys, and a great blue heron rookery; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Conservation and Recreation's Virginia State Parks program is dedicated to preserving the park's wetlands, forests, open water, ponds and open fields and offering many ranger-led and other opportunities for people to be stewards of our natural resources; and

WHEREAS, Rob Hartwell initiated and organized the Eagle Festival to honor the legacy of his mother, Elizabeth Hartwell, recognizing her efforts to preserve this unique environment; and

WHEREAS, Mason Neck State Park hosts the Eagle Festival every spring to encourage a renewed appreciation for the Commonwealth's natural resources and celebrate the national bird of the United States; and

WHEREAS, the Eagle Festival is supported by the Friends of Mason Neck State Park, a nonprofit volunteer organization formed to support the park's mission of conservation, education, and recreation; and

WHEREAS, the Eagle Festival features live wildlife, hands-on educational opportunities, and outdoor recreational and educational activities; and

WHEREAS, Eagle Festival attendees can learn about bald eagle conservation and habitat preservation, including protecting the Potomac River's ecological integrity; and

WHEREAS, exhibitors from a wide range of organizations as well as county, state, and federal agencies share information and provide activities to encourage good stewardship of the environment; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Eagle Festival on the occasion of its 25th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Friends of Mason Neck State Park as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the Eagle Festival's contributions to the Commonwealth, to local life and to the important mission to enhance stewardship of our natural resources and conservation among all Virginians.

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