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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 310

Offered January 20, 1997

Designating Williamsburg as Virginia's Historic City of the Year for 1999.

Patrons—Norment; Delegate: Grayson

Referred to the Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, 1999 will mark the 300th anniversary of the founding of the City of Williamsburg as the Capital of Virginia and its naming in honor of the reigning British sovereign, King William III; and

WHEREAS, Williamsburg began as a settlement known as Middle Plantation, situated on the high ground midway between the James and the York Rivers in 1632, but was renamed in honor of King William III of England in May of 1699; and

WHEREAS, Williamsburg was one of America's earliest planned cities, designed by Governor Francis Nicholson and the other founding fathers as "a new and well-ordered City according to a careful and prepared design"; and

WHEREAS, the Governor and the General Assembly moved to Williamsburg in 1699, and by the end of the year, the construction of a new capitol building was underway; and

WHEREAS, Williamsburg was planned as a model capital city, center of the largest and most populous of the British colonies in America and home of the oldest legislative assembly and most memorable political leaders in the New World; and

WHEREAS, the City of Williamsburg remains today a model of town planning and community organization, with a beautifully preserved 18th-century historic center that has drawn millions of visitors since the restoration of the city began over 70 years ago; and

WHEREAS, Williamsburg is home to the College of William and Mary, founded by Royal Charter of King William III and Queen Mary and alma mater to Presidents Thomas Jefferson, James Monroe, and John Tyler; and

WHEREAS, Williamsburg remains a center of learning, through the College of William and Mary and through America's largest living history museum, which encompasses 500 buildings on over 170 acres and hundreds of craftsmen, gardeners, musicians, and educational interpreters; and

WHEREAS, religious freedom may fairly be said to have begun in Williamsburg in the 1780s, when during his term in the Capital of Williamsburg, Governor Thomas Jefferson began formulating the ideas that led to his Statute of Religious Freedom in 1786; and

WHEREAS, a 300th anniversary is a notable milestone, an opportunity to reflect on a rich historical past, contemplate a future informed by that past, and resolve to revitalize the spirit of community and diverse historical heritage that have characterized the City of Williamsburg for 300 years; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby designate Williamsburg as Virginia's Historic City of the Year for 1999; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Williamsburg Tricentennial Commission as an expression of the General Assembly's best wishes for a glorious 300th anniversary celebration.

INTRODUCED

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