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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 622

Offered February 10, 2025

Commending the South Hill Longbeards Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation.

Patrons—Wright; Senator: Mulchi

WHEREAS, the South Hill Longbeards Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2025, has not only supported wildlife conservation programs and protected the Commonwealth's natural resources, but has gone above and beyond to help people in need through generous volunteer outreach; and

WHEREAS, the National Wild Turkey Federation, an international nonprofit organization with members in 17 countries, was formed in 1973 by Fredericksburg native Tom Rodgers, and the South Hill Longbeards Chapter of the organization was established by Robert "Whimpy" Wells and nine other founding members in December 2000; and

WHEREAS, over the course of its history, the South Hill Longbeards Chapter has benefited from the leadership of three presidents, Whimpy Wells from 2000 to 2007, John H. Washburn from 2008 to 2020, and Nicholas A. Brown from 2021 to the present; and

WHEREAS, the South Hill Longbeards Chapter has supported many state and national conservation initiatives and hosted its first youth outreach event in 2024; and

WHEREAS, the South Hill Longbeards Chapter has earned numerous awards and accolades, including a Most Improved Chapter award and several Golden Gobbler awards for outstanding achievements in fundraising; and

WHEREAS, in late September 2024, after Hurricane Helene made landfall as a category 4 hurricane, the members of the South Hill Longbeards Chapter were inspired to gather supplies for communities adversely affected by the storm; and

WHEREAS, the South Hill Longbeards Chapter planned to fill one trailer with various supplies, but quickly exceeded their goal and coordinated with the local Antler Lodge in South Hill to provide storage for the overflow of donations from chapter members and the wider community; and

WHEREAS, the South Hill Longbeards Chapter established a relationship with the Reverend Greg Withrow, pastor of Temple Baptist Church in Marion, North Carolina, to arrange for delivery of the donations; and

WHEREAS, on October 5, 2024, the South Hill Longbeards Chapter received a call requesting an immediate delivery of hay for animals and medical supplies, and by the following morning, more than 90 bales of hay, a pallet of water, and medical supplies were en route to Marion; and

WHEREAS, on October 10, the members of the South Hill Longbeards Chapter set out with four additional trailers of supplies and made deliveries to Temple Baptist Church, the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and the Marion Moose Lodge; and

WHEREAS, with donations still pouring in at home, the South Hill Longbeards Chapter arranged a delivery of baby items, medical supplies, water, food, and clothing to affected communities in Orlando, Florida, as well as a third trip to North Carolina, which included a donation of heaters and cold weather gear; and

WHEREAS, as the holidays approached, the South Hill Longbeards Chapter prepared and delivered 200 boxes of family-sized meals to Asheville, North Carolina, on the night before Thanksgiving, followed by 209 pre-filled stockings for children and Christmas gifts for 11 adopted families in Southside Virginia; and

WHEREAS, in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene, the South Hill Longbeards Chapter provided an estimated \$400,000 of supplies to families in need; and

WHEREAS, the South Hill Longbeards Chapter achieved this compassionate mission of mercy with support from an army of volunteers who generously donated their time and efforts to coordinate, prepare, package, sort, and haul vital supplies; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the South Hill Longbeards Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation on the occasion of its 25th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the South Hill Longbeards Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the organization's exceptional dedication to both conservation and community service.

INTRODUCED

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