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**HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 658**

Offered February 11, 2025

*Commending the Falls Church Volunteer Fire Department.*

Patrons—Simon, Hope, Lopez and Watts

WHEREAS, for more than 100 years, the Falls Church Volunteer Fire Department has safeguarded the lives and property of the residents of Falls Church, demonstrating an enduring commitment to excellence in fire service and helping to build a strong sense of community through outreach and local engagement; and

WHEREAS, the Falls Church Volunteer Fire Department traces its roots to 1898, when a volunteer fire company was established to replace the existing system of using bucket brigades, which had failed to save the Kerr Mill building; and

WHEREAS, Falls Church levied a special tax to purchase three chemical firefighting engines, which were originally pulled by hand but later refitted to be drawn by horses; in 1918, the Falls Church Volunteer Fire Department purchased one of the first pieces of motorized fire equipment in Northern Virginia, a Ford Model T known as Old Tom; and

WHEREAS, Old Tom was retrofitted with one of the tanks from the original 55-gallon chemical engine and served as the Falls Church Volunteer Fire Department's primary apparatus for many years; Old Tom is still owned by the department and is often featured in open house events or local parades; and

WHEREAS, to better serve the community, the Falls Church Volunteer Fire Department began to reorganize in the 1920s and was officially incorporated in 1925 with J. Earl Brunner as its first president and Clarence Pullman as its first fire chief; and

WHEREAS, the Falls Church Volunteer Fire Department constructed its first fire station near the location of the current station on Lee Highway and updated its fleet with a Republic engine and an American LaFrance pumper; and

WHEREAS, in 1940, the Arlington County Fire Department was established and began providing professional staffers to support the Falls Church Volunteer Fire Department and other local departments; and

WHEREAS, the Falls Church Volunteer Fire Department maintains a strong, working relationship with the Arlington County Fire Department and officials from the City of Falls Church and Arlington County to ensure that members of the community receive high-quality service and care in a timely manner; and

WHEREAS, in addition to providing emergency medical care and responding to all types of fires and emergency incidents, the Falls Church Volunteer Fire Department participates in local outreach activities to promote fire and life safety education; and

WHEREAS, the hardworking members of the Falls Church Volunteer Fire Department have touched countless lives over the decades, and their devoted service has helped make Falls Church a stronger, safer community; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That the Falls Church Volunteer Fire Department hereby be commended on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of its incorporation; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Falls Church Volunteer Fire Department as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for the department's long legacy of service to the Falls Church community.

INTRODUCED

HR658