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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 668

Offered February 13, 2025

Commending Leesburg Animal Park.

Patron—Martinez

WHEREAS, Leesburg Animal Park has helped young people gain a better understanding and appreciation for animals through interactive educational programs at its current location for 25 years; and

WHEREAS, Leesburg Animal Park originally opened in 1980 and served families from its location on Hunter Mill Road in Vienna until 1999; the park reopened at its current location on James Monroe Highway in Leesburg in 2000; and

WHEREAS, Leesburg Animal Park is home to more than 100 exotic and domestic animals, including camels, zebras, gibbons, squirrel monkeys, lemurs, emus, wallabies, cavies, kookaburras, and common farm animals; trained keepers not only care for the animals, but offer informative daily talks; and

WHEREAS, Leesburg Animal Park offers day camps for children on select days, as well as week-long summer camps where kids can learn about animals and serve as a keeper for a week; and

WHEREAS, during the spring and summer, Leesburg Animal Park hosts monthly catch and release fishing derbies where children can win a fishing pole for the biggest fish caught; one of its most popular annual events is the Pumpkin Village fall festival; and

WHEREAS, Leesburg Animal Park partners with local schools to offer assembly-style programs, as well as small group educational programs; and

WHEREAS, Leesburg Animal Park is a leader in conservation, working with the Nature Conservancy to protect the waters and lands that support life around the world; the park also supports programs to protect endangered communities of Bonobo monkeys in the Congo and has successfully bred and raised other endangered species, such as the white-handed gibbon; and

WHEREAS, Leesburg Animal Park is owned by Robert and Shirley Johnson; their three children, Aaron, Amy, and Dale, and nine grandchildren have all made lasting memories within the park and played a role in maintaining its ongoing commitment to excellence; and

WHEREAS, Leesburg Animal Park has fulfilled its mission through the hard work of its staff members and keepers and the generosity of volunteers and community partners; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Leesburg Animal Park on the occasion of its 25th anniversary at its current location; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Robert and Shirley Johnson, owners of Leesburg Animal Park, as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the park's contributions to the Leesburg community.