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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 683

Offered February 14, 2025

Commemorating the life and legacy of William Woodford.

Patrons—Leftwich, Clark, Ennis and Hayes; Senators: Craig, Jordan and Lucas

WHEREAS, William Woodford was a native of Caroline County, a brigadier general in the Continental Army, and a patriot whose courage and sacrifice during the American Revolutionary War led to the birth of the nation nearly 250 years ago; and

WHEREAS, William Woodford was born into a family with a strong military tradition and began his service as a captain in the Virginia militia in October 1755; and

WHEREAS, during the French and Indian War, William Woodford joined George Washington's 1st Virginia Regiment as an ensign and later earned a promotion to lieutenant; in 1771, he rose to the rank of lieutenant colonel in the Caroline County militia; and

WHEREAS, at the Third Virginia Convention in the summer of 1775, William Woodford was appointed colonel and commanding officer of the 2nd Virginia Regiment; and

WHEREAS, William Woodford led the 2nd Virginia Regiment during the Battle of Great Bridge on December 9, 1775, the first land battle in the Southern colonies and a historic victory for the Continental Army, in which the Virginia militia drove the royal governor of Virginia, Lord Dunmore, from the Norfolk peninsula, marking the end of royal authority in the colony of Virginia; and

WHEREAS, after he was promoted to brigadier general of the Continental Army in February 1777, William Woodford joined Commander-in-Chief George Washington and led the Virginia Line in several major battles; and

WHEREAS, William Woodford was wounded resisting the British advance on Philadelphia at the Battle of Brandywine Creek, then quickly recovered to lead his soldiers at the Battle of Germantown, followed by the decisive Battle of Monmouth, which shifted the course of the war; and

WHEREAS, in 1780, William Woodford and the Virginia Line went to reinforce American troops at Charleston, South Carolina, but shortly thereafter were compelled to surrender to the British Army; and

WHEREAS, after suffering several horrific months on a prison ship anchored outside of New York City, William Woodford died on November 13, 1780, at the age of 46; and

WHEREAS, in addition to Woodford County, Illinois, and Woodford County, Kentucky, the Town of Woodford in Caroline County is named in honor of William Woodford's extraordinary contributions to America's fight for independence; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commemorate the life and legacy of William Woodford on the 250th anniversary of his historic victory at the Battle of Great Bridge; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Great Bridge Battlefield & Waterways History Foundation as an expression of the General Assembly's deep respect and admiration for his impact on the history of the Commonwealth and the nation.

INTRODUCED

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