

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 433

Commending the Alexandria Archaeological Commission.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, January 20, 2025
Agreed to by the Senate, January 23, 2025

WHEREAS, for 50 years, the Alexandria Archaeological Commission has facilitated community archaeology to help local residents forge a stronger connection with the city's long and rich history; and

WHEREAS, members of the Alexandria community began to develop an interest in the preservation of local history after urban renewal projects in the 1960s and archaeological excavations by the Smithsonian Institution in the 1970s; and

WHEREAS, the Alexandria Archaeological Commission was officially established in 1975 as a citizens advisory group that was embedded within local government, not associated with a museum, and treated archaeology as a broader local issue to encourage input from a wide range of perspectives; and

WHEREAS, the Alexandria Archaeological Commission's collaborative leadership style has brought together city officials and staff members, developers, homeowners, nonprofit organizations, volunteers, students, and concerned citizens to preserve their shared heritage and interpret the history of all areas, all times, and all peoples of Alexandria; and

WHEREAS, the Alexandria Archaeological Commission oversaw the hiring of Alexandria's first professional archaeologist, ensuring that the city stays engaged with best practices in the archaeological field, and the creation of a city ordinance that established archaeological guidelines for developers; and

WHEREAS, the Alexandria Archaeological Commission guided the city's investigation of indigenous history at Jones Point Park, the preservation of the Civil War-era Contrabands and Freedmen Cemetery, the creation of the African American Heritage Memorial Park, and the Bottoms Neighborhood Project to research one of the oldest African American neighborhoods in the city; and

WHEREAS, the Alexandria Archaeological Commission was also involved with the Alexandria Canal Tide Lock Project and developed a plan to document the history of the city's waterfront and provide guidance for future developments in the area; and

WHEREAS, in addition, the Alexandria Archaeological Commission created the Alexandria Archaeology Museum and recognizes achievements in public archaeology through the Del Pepper Archaeology Award and the Ben Brenman Award for Archaeology; and

WHEREAS, over the years, more than 100 Alexandria residents representing various community interests, areas of expertise, educational organizations, and the business and tourism sectors, have donated countless hours of work to the Alexandria Archaeological Commission, fostering an engaged citizenry and responsive public servants, all of whom work together to explore the city's complex and compelling history; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Alexandria Archaeological Commission on the occasion of its 50th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Alexandria Archaeological Commission as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for its work to foster a community that is well-informed about its past and better prepared to meet the challenges of the present and future.

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