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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 213

Offered March 3, 2026

Commending Maymont.

Patron—Carr

WHEREAS, Maymont, a treasured 100-acre estate in the heart of Richmond that connects people with nature, history, wildlife, and each other, celebrates its 100th anniversary as a public space in 2026; and

WHEREAS, from 1893 to 1925, Maymont was the home of James and Sallie Dooley, who built a 33-room mansion designed by architect Edgerton Rodgers in a style that combined Romanesque Revival with Queen Anne elements and commissioned landscape architects to design a Japanese Garden, an Italian Garden, and a classic Olmsted-inspired landscape filled with native and exotic trees; and

WHEREAS, upon their deaths, the Dooleys bequeathed Maymont to the City of Richmond to be used as a park and museum for the benefit of the people; the grounds were opened as a city park on January 1, 1926, and the mansion opened as a museum in March of that year; and

WHEREAS, more than 55,000 people visited the mansion at Maymont in its first year, and many more enjoyed the estate's vast grounds and gardens; and

WHEREAS, recognizing Maymont's potential as a destination for visitors of all ages, several endeavors were advanced to enhance the site's facilities and exhibits in its first few decades of operation, including comfort stations built by the Works Progress Administration, the Thalhimer Wildlife Exhibit, and a nature center and farm; and

WHEREAS, Maymont was listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places in 1971; four years later, the Maymont Foundation was engaged by the City of Richmond to manage the site's operations, preserve and care for the historic buildings, collections, gardens, rescued native wildlife, and farm animals at the site, and create programs and experiences to delight, educate, and inspire all who visit; and

WHEREAS, over the next 50 years, with the generous support of the community, the Maymont Foundation restored the Dooleys' Gilded Age mansion and its collection of fine and decorative arts, renovated Maymont's ever-popular animal farm, and created various educational experiences to engage guests throughout Maymont's 100 acres; and

WHEREAS, signature educational experiences and resources at Maymont spearheaded by the Maymont Foundation in recent years included the "In Domestic Service" and "Run of the River" exhibitions and the Robins Nature Center that was newly constructed in 1999; and

WHEREAS, since its founding, the Maymont Foundation has been a careful steward of the unique historic character and environmental resources of Richmond's most cherished public space and has welcomed visitors and residents of all ages and from all corners of the community to explore and benefit from Maymont; and

WHEREAS, consistently ranked as one of Central Virginia's most-loved attractions by locals and visitors alike, Maymont today welcomes over one million diverse guests annually, offering free admission to the grounds, along with tours, educational programs, seasonal festivals, open-air concerts, and unique settings for celebrations and gatherings with friends and family; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Maymont on the occasion of its 100th anniversary as a public space; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Maymont Foundation as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for Maymont's contributions to Richmond and the Commonwealth.

INTRODUCED

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