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SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 149

Offered March 12, 2026

Commending the Suffolk Peanut Fest.

Patron—Jordan

WHEREAS, the Suffolk Peanut Fest is one of southeastern Virginia's most beloved traditions; held each autumn in Suffolk, the festival celebrates the region's deep agricultural heritage and its long-standing reputation as the "Peanut Capital of the World"; and

WHEREAS, for generations, peanuts have played a central role in the area's economy and culture, and the festival has become a joyful expression of community pride; and

WHEREAS, the first large celebration dedicated to the peanut industry in Suffolk took place in 1941, when the city hosted more than 10,000 attendees at the National Peanut Festival, which included a parade, dances, and the crowning of a festival queen; and

WHEREAS, the modern peanut festival traces its roots to 1978, when the Suffolk Chamber of Commerce launched a new event called Harvest Fest in downtown Suffolk; the festival featured parades, hot-air balloons, concerts, dances, a carnival, and a festival queen; as the event grew in popularity, it evolved into what is now the Suffolk Peanut Fest and moved to the Suffolk Executive Airport, allowing space for larger attractions, rides, and crowds; and

WHEREAS, over time, the Suffolk Peanut Fest expanded into a four-day celebration each October that now draws more than 100,000 visitors annually and stands as one of the largest community events in the Hampton Roads region and a proud symbol of Suffolk's agricultural identity; and

WHEREAS, signature events of the Suffolk Peanut Fest include the Peanut Fest Parade through downtown Suffolk, the Peanut Butter Sculpting Competition, demolition derbies and the Peanut Cup races, and numerous family activities, such as petting zoos, pony rides, carnival rides, straw mazes, and interactive exhibits; and

WHEREAS, the Suffolk Peanut Fest has long supported charitable causes and community initiatives, such as local organizations, first responder and public safety initiatives, veteran and military appreciation programs, and national charities, such as the Tunnels to Towers Foundation; and

WHEREAS, the Suffolk Peanut Fest regularly highlights national and community service, with exhibits honoring firefighters and first responders, including displays remembering the victims of the September 11, 2001, attacks, with firefighters who served at Ground Zero participating as guides and educators; the event also regularly features Military Appreciation Day, offering discounted admission to active-duty military, veterans, and first responders in recognition of their service; and

WHEREAS, the Suffolk Peanut Fest continues to thrive as one of the Commonwealth's most cherished festivals, celebrating the agricultural roots that built Suffolk, while also strengthening community bonds and supporting charitable causes; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate of Virginia, That the Suffolk Peanut Fest hereby be commended for its enduring status as a beloved and longstanding tradition in the Commonwealth; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Linda and Billy Cooper, chairs of the Suffolk Peanut Fest, as an expression of the Senate of Virginia's appreciation for the festival's role in honoring and celebrating the Commonwealth's culture and traditions.

INTRODUCED

SR149