

2026 SPECIAL SESSION I

ENROLLED

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 2148

Commending Rita Carter Forrester.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, June 22, 2026

WHEREAS, Rita Carter Forrester, a descendant of the legendary Carter Family and director of the Carter Family Fold in Hiltons, has worked tirelessly to preserve and promote the Carter Family's legacy and to celebrate the musical traditions of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the original Carter Family, including A.P., Sara, and Maybelle, made country music history and helped establish the fabric of American country music with their first recordings beginning in 1927, during what Johnny Cash referred to as the "Big Bang of Country Music"; and

WHEREAS, over succeeding decades, the Carter Family introduced hundreds of songs that became part of the American country music canon, including "Wildwood Flower," "Keep on the Sunny Side," "Will the Circle Be Unbroken," and "The Wabash Cannonball"; and

WHEREAS, Janette Carter, daughter of A.P. and Sara and mother of Rita Forrester, who fulfilled a deathbed promise to her father to "carry the music forward," drew on her faith and the strength and inspiration of family and friends when she founded the Carter Family Fold, a weekly live traditional country music program and venue at the homeplace of the Carter Family, which has since become a vital part of the Commonwealth's contemporary cultural story; and

WHEREAS, Janette Carter's daughter, Rita Forrester, assisted her mother in producing and running the Carter Family Fold for many years, while also traveling to events regionally, nationally, and internationally to receive accolades and awards and meet with foreign dignitaries, including British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher; and

WHEREAS, through trials and tribulations, Rita Forrester persevered in helping to maintain a consistent, quality, and authentic experience at the Carter Family Fold, ensuring all who came regularly from every state in the nation and many countries around the world would have the opportunity to enjoy authentic traditional American country music; and

WHEREAS, after her mother's passing, Rita Forrester assumed duties as the director of the Carter Family Fold and dedicated herself to ensuring that this important part of the Commonwealth's cultural heritage would continue by performing tasks such as scheduling, hosting and introducing the performances, personally making homemade chili for the audience, and traveling to represent the program and the Carter Family; and

WHEREAS, Rita Forrester's humble, gentle manner belies her powerful influence; in days when social media and artificial intelligence replace the cultural heritage that has sustained families for generations, those who nurture the traditional arts are the heroes of society; and

WHEREAS, Rita Forrester's devotion, commitment, and steadfast faith are inextricably woven into the legacy of the Carter Family, and as a vital part of the foundation of the Carter Family Fold, she has become a heart stone of the Commonwealth's musical history and culture; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That Rita Carter Forrester hereby be commended for her efforts to preserve and promote the artistic legacy of the Carter Family at the Carter Family Fold; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Rita Carter Forrester as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for her contributions to the cultural and musical traditions of the Commonwealth.

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