

2024 SPECIAL SESSION I

ENROLLED

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 704

Commending the Virginia Highlands Festival.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, June 28, 2024

WHEREAS, for 75 years, the Virginia Highlands Festival has served as the premier event for showcasing the arts, traditions, history, and culture of Southwest Virginia; and

WHEREAS, originally known as the Virginia Highlands Festival of the Arts and Crafts, the Virginia Highlands Festival was first held in 1949 by Robert Porterfield, founder of the famed Barter Theatre in Abingdon, who aspired to establish an event to preserve and celebrate the cultural heritage of Southwest Virginia; and

WHEREAS, from the beginning, the aim of the Virginia Highlands Festival has been both to bring artists and lecturers to Abingdon for the benefit of the local community and to celebrate and honor the Appalachian folk traditions of the region; and

WHEREAS, today, the Virginia Highlands Festival features artists and performers from around the world who descend on Abingdon each year to participate in lively creative exchange and to appreciate the region and its residents; and

WHEREAS, the success of the Virginia Highlands Festival is made possible by the more than 100 volunteers who work tirelessly to plan and staff the events, tours, performances, exhibitions, and other activities that are part of the festival; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Highlands Festival effectively fosters community ties with the support of many local and regional partnerships that enable the event to present the creative, historical, and natural resources of the Appalachian region; and

WHEREAS, the next Virginia Highlands Festival will be held from July 26 to August 4, 2024, and will feature more than 200 individual events and activities, including an award-winning arts and craft show, an antiques and vintage market, music concerts, guided hikes, lectures on local history and culture, the historic Writers & Readers Days literary showcase, and culinary offerings; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of its accomplishments as a celebration of Appalachian art and culture, the Virginia Highlands Festival has been voted "Best Art Event" in the region by readers of *Virginia Living* magazine; and

WHEREAS, over its history, the Virginia Highlands Festival has grown into one of Southwest Virginia's marquee annual events and an important part of what makes the region a wonderful place to live, work, and raise a family; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That the Virginia Highlands Festival hereby be commended on the occasion of its 75th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to organizers of the Virginia Highlands Festival as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for the event's history and its contributions to Southwest Virginia and the Commonwealth.

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