

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 457

Commending the Virginia High School League.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 5, 2014

Agreed to by the Senate, March 7, 2014

WHEREAS, the Virginia High School League has served the Commonwealth's public high schools and student athletes by facilitating athletic and educational programs and intrastate tournaments for 100 years; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia High School League (VHSL) traces its origin to ideas raised in the spring of 1912 at the University of Virginia, where then-President Dr. Edwin A. Alderman, together with Dr. Charles G. Maphis of the Department of Education, planted the seeds for a statewide high school organization to conduct education-based competitions; and

WHEREAS, the University of Virginia Washington and Jefferson Societies first sponsored a state debate contest beginning on April 30, 1914, involving 20 schools, followed soon thereafter by state athletic contests in the sports of baseball, basketball, and track; and

WHEREAS, from its humble beginning in 1913 and 1914, when 20 schools competed in state debate, the VHSL today serves 313 schools and nearly 200,000 students, participating in 27 sports and 11 academic/fine arts activities and offers more than 150 state competitions; and

WHEREAS, VHSL member schools join the nonprofit, voluntary organization each year with the expressed written consent of their school boards, thus affording local control and oversight of the league's operations; and

WHEREAS, the VHSL established and regularly reviews, modifies, and maintains rules and regulations to govern the various competitions and to ensure a level playing field for all competitors in the events; and

WHEREAS, participation in VHSL activities enriches each student's educational experience, promotes academic achievement, and serves as an ideal way for students to develop the skills needed to be well-rounded citizens; and

WHEREAS, VHSL programs foster involvement of a diverse population and promote positive school and community relations, reaching students in every corner of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, studies indicate that students who participate in co-curricular activities have higher grade-point averages and attendance rates, fewer disciplinary problems, and lower dropout rates than nonparticipants; and

WHEREAS, VHSL activities help provide direction and motivation for student participants, teach life lessons outside the classroom, instill values of teamwork, goal setting, self-discipline, perseverance, and respect for self and others, and allow students to learn how to win with humility and lose with dignity; and

WHEREAS, league services now include a nationally recognized annual Student Leaders Conference, coaches education and professional development opportunities, protection for participants through strong sports medicine initiatives and catastrophic insurance for students, and training and assignment of more than 8,000 contest officials in 12 sports and four academic activities; and

WHEREAS, recognition of outstanding achievements is afforded through the Virginia High School Hall of Fame, 32 student scholarships, sportsmanship awards, and honors for individuals who contribute significantly at the local level; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Virginia High School League on the occasion of its 100th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Ken Tilley, executive director of the Virginia High School League, as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the organization's many contributions to the Commonwealth.

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