

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 245

Recognizing and congratulating the city of Manassas, Virginia, on the 150th anniversary of its founding.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 22, 2023

Ms. WEXTON submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability

RESOLUTION

Recognizing and congratulating the city of Manassas,
Virginia, on the 150th anniversary of its founding.

Whereas the residents of the city of Manassas will celebrate the city's historic 150th anniversary as an active and involved community on April 1, 2023, at Dean Park;

Whereas, originally called Manassas Junction, the town of Manassas was incorporated in 1873 by the Virginia General Assembly;

Whereas the town grew out of being located at the junction of the Orange, Alexandria, and the Manassas Gap railroad lines;

Whereas the fortunes of Manassas and its establishment as a town are linked to the railroad;

Whereas, when the Orange and Alexandria Railroad reached what was then called Tudor Hall in 1851 and connected to the Manassas Gap Railroad, the area became known as Manassas Junction, offering farmers a chance to move their grain and establishing a strategic location for growth after the Civil War;

Whereas the first law enforcement in the then town of Manassas began in 1873 with Town Sargent Jacob W. Hornbaker;

Whereas the selection of Manassas as the county seat and construction of the county courthouse in 1894 spurred a building and population boom and led to the growth of the town;

Whereas seven of the city's historic treasures are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, including—

(1) Liberia, the 1825 home and grounds where nearly 90 enslaved people toiled on a plantation, where both Confederate and Union forces set up headquarters during the Civil War, and where President Abraham Lincoln visited;

(2) Mayfield Earthwork Fort, built by Confederate forces and the enslaved in 1861 to defend against Union advances;

(3) Cannon Branch Earthwork Fort, built in 1863 to defend rail lines supplying Union troops;

(4) Annaburg, the 1894 summer home of brewer Robert Portner, believed to be the first house in the country to have air conditioning after Portner invented and installed his own cooling machine;

(5) the iconic 1914 Manassas Water Tower, built as the town established its own water utility;

(6) the nationally recognized Manassas Industrial School for Colored Youth, founded in 1893 by former slave Jennie Dean to provide both academic and vocational training for African-American youth when segregated schools limited their opportunities; and

(7) the Manassas Local Historic District, which includes 300 architecturally and historically significant structures in the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods;

Whereas the first all-volunteer fire company, the Manassas Volunteer Fire Company, was founded in 1892 to make the community safer, and in 1914 the first fire station was built and then relocated to its current location at 9322 Center Street;

Whereas, in 1895, telephone service was established for the blossoming town, and the first electricity was generated in 1913 and run by the municipality;

Whereas, in 1905, a horrendous fire swept through the town and burned about 30 buildings, and by town ordinance, these buildings were rebuilt in brick and fire-resistant materials;

Whereas the first Greater Manassas Christmas Parade was held in 1945 and is the largest Christmas parade in the area;

Whereas the first airport in Manassas was established in 1930, and the current location of the Manassas Regional Airport opened in 1964 and is currently the busiest General Aviation Airport in the Commonwealth with over 400 based aircraft and generates over \$275,000,000 in economic benefit to the surrounding region;

Whereas the visionary town council passed an ambitious \$5,000,000 bond referendum to purchase land on Broad Run to construct a dam that would create the Lake Manassas reservoir, providing a dedicated water supply to the city and surrounding Prince William County;

Whereas, in 1964, using funds from donations by the community, the Prince William Medical Center (now the University of Virginia Prince William Medical Center) was established to aid in the health care of Manassas area residents;

Whereas, as early as 1897, town father George Carr Round recognized the strength of Manassas diverse population and its newcomers, writing of the town “It is especially cosmopolitan.”;

Whereas today the city is the fifth most diverse locality in Virginia, with a 60.4 percent non-White population, a 26.5 percent foreign-born population, and where Manassas City Public Schools serve students whose families speak more than 27 different languages in the home;

Whereas IBM moved into the town of Manassas in 1968, creating jobs and housing, such as Georgetown South;

Whereas the city of Manassas is a regional employment center and has a robust history of major corporate investment and job creation beginning in the 1970s with IBM and most recently exemplified by Micron Technologies Inc., making the largest capital investment in Virginia history;

Whereas the Manassas Museum opened in its first location in 1974, documenting the city’s history and culture and providing free cultural exhibits to residents and visitors alike;

Whereas the town of Manassas became an independent city in 1975, one of only 41 independent cities in the United States with a population of at least 12,800 at the time;

Whereas the Virginia Railway Express began operations in Manassas on June 22, 1992, providing commuter rail service to the city generating access for all of northern Virginia and the District of Columbia, as well as a stop on Amtrak's Cardinal, Crescent, and Northeast Regional trains;

Whereas the Loy E. Harris Pavilion was completed as a "town square"-like facility for gatherings and concerts in 2000, and has grown to become the event center for the area, hosting concerts, events, and even weddings in the warmer months and ice skating in the winter months, making Manassas a destination for events and festivals;

Whereas the city of Manassas logo and tagline of "Historic Heart. Modern Beat." was adopted in 2015 not only by the city, but by the community as well;

Whereas the Manassas City Police Department is one of the highest nationally accredited departments in the country, being accredited as a Gold Standard with Excellence agency by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement; and

Whereas the city of Manassas has grown from a city of 12,800 in 1975 to a 10-square mile city of more than 43,000 in 2023, close to the urban amenities of the District of Columbia but with a small-town feel: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

1 (1) recognizes and congratulates the city of Ma-
2 nassas, Virginia, on the 150th anniversary of its
3 founding;

4 (2) celebrates the historical significance of Ma-
5 nassas and the contributions of the city to the Com-
6 monwealth of Virginia and the Nation; and

7 (3) honors the individuals and communities that
8 have shaped Manassas history, growth, and develop-
9 ment over the past 150 years.

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