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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 330

Offered March 2, 2022

Commending The Waltons.

Patron—Bell

WHEREAS, *The Waltons*, a historical drama television program that depicted the wholesome mountain lifestyle of a rural Virginia community and has endured as a cherished example of Americana, premiered 50 years ago in 1972; and

WHEREAS, *The Waltons* was developed by Earl Hamner, Jr., who based the show on his 1961 book *Spencer's Mountain* about his childhood in Nelson County; the show aired on CBS and took place in the fictional Jefferson County, Virginia, with Hamner's real-life experiences forming the basis of many episodes; and

WHEREAS, following John Walton, Jr., better known as John-Boy, as well as his parents, grandparents and siblings on Walton's Mountain, *The Waltons* depicted the family's daily life over a 37-year period, which included the Great Depression, World War II, the Kennedy assassination, and the moon landing; and

WHEREAS, CBS executives at the time believed *The Waltons* would fail due to the family-oriented nature of the program, however it quickly rose in viewership and became the second-most popular show in the country; and

WHEREAS, *The Waltons* built a loyal following and ultimately produced 221 episodes over nine seasons and six movie specials; with Earl Hamner, himself, as the wise, reassuring narrator, providing an introduction and postscript to each episode, the long-running show inspired audiences through its sentimentality and hopefulness; and

WHEREAS, in what became an iconic ending to each episode, the Walton family members bid each other good night, and the phrase "Good night, John-Boy" is now remembered as a beloved expression of the strong family values evoked by *The Waltons*; and

WHEREAS, through *The Waltons*, Earl Hamner helped preserve traditional stories from the Blue Ridge Mountains and affirmed the innate goodness of the human spirit, the benefits of learning from the past, the power of childhood imagination, and the importance of strong family and community values; and

WHEREAS, as acclaimed by critics as it was beloved by audiences, *The Waltons* received 37 Emmy nominations and 13 Emmy awards and 14 Golden Globes nominations and three Golden Globes awards; and

WHEREAS, in 1992, the Walton's Mountain Museum opened in Schuyler to help preserve the show's history and legacy and has welcomed tens of thousands of guests from all over the country and the world, many of whom have stayed at John and Olivia's Bed and Breakfast, a nearby lodging that evokes the show's period decor; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend *The Waltons* on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the program's premiere; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare copies of this resolution for presentation to the Walton's Mountain Museum and to John and Olivia's Bed and Breakfast as an expression of the General Assembly's appreciation for the cultural relevance of *The Waltons* and admiration for the program's legacy in the Commonwealth and throughout the world.

INTRODUCED

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