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SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 20

Offered February 14, 2022

Commending the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities.

Patrons—Hashmi, Ebbin, Howell and Spruill

WHEREAS, the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities, a nonprofit organization that promotes understanding and inclusion in collaboration with schools, businesses, and communities, has greatly served residents of the Commonwealth for many years; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities (VCIC) began in 1935 as the Lynchburg Round Table, where religious leaders met to develop ways to foster harmony and understanding between people of different faiths, backgrounds, and cultures; and

WHEREAS, by 1946, chapters inspired by the Lynchburg Round Table in Norfolk and Richmond had affiliated with the National Conference of Christians and Jews (NCCJ), and they were soon followed by additional chapters in other cities of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, under the banner of the Virginia Region of the NCCJ, these chapters advanced interfaith understanding and cooperation through youth seminars, teacher workshops, clergy dialogues, and other special programs; and

WHEREAS, since 2007, after several name changes and revisions to its mission to incorporate other faiths and issues, the organization has been known as the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities; and

WHEREAS, the VCIC continues to grow as a powerful force for interfaith cooperation and community inclusion and is always prepared to convene diverse religious groups in opposition to bigotry and prejudice, as it has in recent years on behalf of the Muslim and Jewish communities of Richmond; and

WHEREAS, since 2020, the VCIC has administered more than 1,700 programs in schools, businesses, and communities that have made an impact in the lives of more than 50,000 Virginians; and

WHEREAS, VCIC's school-based programs included student workshops and forums designed to reduce bullying and professional development workshops for educators and administrators to increase student engagement and promote inclusive pedagogy; and

WHEREAS, the VCIC encouraged positive, inclusive relations in the workplace through myriad programs, including the Virginia Inclusion Summit, the Workplace Inclusion Network, and customized workplace trainings and consultations; and

WHEREAS, the VCIC's other notable ventures in the community included rapid-response support after incidents of bias, bullying, or discrimination; development of virtual programming in response to the COVID-19 pandemic; and presentations of the organization's prestigious Humanitarian Awards at events throughout the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, members of the VCIC have generously given their time in service to the Commonwealth through appointments to the Virginia Complete Count Commission, the Commission on African American History Education in the Commonwealth, and the Task Force on Culturally Inclusive School Meals and Calendars; and

WHEREAS, through their tireless efforts to foster understanding and bring communities together, the VCIC and its members have helped make the Commonwealth a more welcoming place for all; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate of Virginia, That the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities hereby be commended for its legacy of service and for its unwavering commitment to engendering goodwill and understanding between individuals of all causes and creeds; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities as an expression of the Senate of Virginia's admiration for the organization's objectives and its contributions to the Commonwealth.

INTRODUCED

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