

## 2022 SESSION

INTRODUCED

22106658D

### HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 60

Offered February 25, 2022

*Commending Friends of Dumfries Slave Cemetery.*

Patron—Mundon King

WHEREAS, Friends of Dumfries Slave Cemetery, a recently incorporated 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, has made great strides to advance its mission to preserve, maintain, and restore the slave cemetery in the Town of Dumfries; and

WHEREAS, the origins of Friends of Dumfries Slave Cemetery date to 2009, when Prince William County Public Schools commissioned Thunderbird Archeology, Inc., to conduct a delineation of the cemetery property and an inventory of its burial sites, which led the school division to commit to preserving the area; and

WHEREAS, the group that would become Friends of Dumfries Slave Cemetery received support in the beginning from Betty Covington, then Potomac District representative on the Prince William County School Board; Ralph Smith, president of the Prince William County branch of the NAACP, and others who enthusiastically supported their mission to care for the site; and

WHEREAS, the Prince William County branch of the NAACP gained entry rights to the cemetery in 2011 and a core group of members, along with those of other community organizations, volunteered to clean up the site, which had become overgrown after years of neglect, bringing respect and dignity to the formerly enslaved individuals interred there; and

WHEREAS, for years, members of Friends of Dumfries Slave Cemetery have worked to make the cemetery elegant and pristine, memorializing African American men, women, and children whose contributions to Dumfries were not acknowledged in their lifetimes; and

WHEREAS, after years of progress, the group of concerned citizens formally incorporated as Friends of Dumfries Slave Cemetery and established its status as a 501(c)(3) organization, cementing its efforts to honor those buried in the Dumfries slave cemetery and facilitating its ability to fundraise in support of future endeavors; and

WHEREAS, by reclaiming the slave cemetery in Dumfries from the effects of nature, time, and neglect, Friends of Dumfries Slave Cemetery has brought greater awareness to the life stories of the cemetery's inhabitants and understanding of the role they played in the history of Dumfries; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That Friends of Dumfries Slave Cemetery hereby be commended for its dedication to preserving the lives and memories of valued members of the Dumfries community; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Friends of Dumfries Slave Cemetery as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for the organization's mission and contributions to the Commonwealth.

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