



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Office of the Governor

Ralph S. Northam
Governor

March 21, 2021

Mr. J. Brett Blanton
Architect of the Capitol
United States Capitol
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Mr. Blanton:

On behalf of the Commonwealth of Virginia, I write to request approval by the Joint Committee of Congress on the Library of the selection of Barbara Rose Johns as the subject of Virginia's new statue for the National Statuary Hall Collection at the United States Capitol.

Barbara Rose Johns was a civil rights pioneer who was born in New York and moved to her parents' native Prince Edward County, Virginia, as a child. In April 1951, at age 16, she led a student walkout to protest conditions at the segregated Robert Russa Moton High School, where facilities were vastly inferior to those at the county's white high school. The students, demanding a new school, sought aid from the Virginia NAACP, which instead offered to represent them in a lawsuit seeking an end to segregation. *Davis v. Prince Edward* was the only student-initiated case consolidated into *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), in which the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that public school segregation was unconstitutional. The courageous actions and leadership demonstrated by teenaged Barbara Rose Johns changed the course of American history.

I have enclosed copies of the resolutions recently agreed to by the Virginia General Assembly authorizing the selection of Barbara Rose Johns. The Senate agreed to SJ288 on February 3, 2021 and the House of Delegates agreed to HJ525 on February 24, 2021. Virginia stands ready to enter into a formal agreement regarding our commitment to abide by the guidelines for the design and fabrication of the new statue and to assume all associated costs related to its design, construction, transportation, placement and unveiling ceremony.

I respectfully request that, if you deem this request complete, it be forwarded to the Joint Committee of Congress on the Library. Should you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Julie Langan at Julie.langan@dhr.virginia.gov or (804) 482-6087 and

she will promptly provide you with whatever is needed to move this request forward as expeditiously as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ralph S. Northam". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Ralph S. Northam

cc: Virginia Congressional Delegation
Julie Langan, Department of Historic Resources

2021 SPECIAL SESSION I

HOUSE SUBSTITUTE

21103446D

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 525
AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE
(Proposed by the House Committee on Rules
on January 22, 2021)
(Patron Prior to Substitute—Delegate Ward)

Authorizing, and directing the submission to the Joint Committee of Congress on the Library, that the vacant spot of the Commonwealth in the National Statuary Hall Collection at the United States Capitol be filled with a statue to commemorate Barbara Rose Johns.

WHEREAS, pursuant to 2 U.S.C. § 2131, each state is permitted to provide and furnish to the United States Capitol two statues, in marble or bronze, of deceased persons who have been prominent citizens of the state for placement in the National Statuary Hall Collection; and

WHEREAS, currently, Virginia is represented in the National Statuary Hall Collection by George Washington and one vacant position; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to 2 U.S.C. § 2132, a state may request that the Joint Committee of Congress on the Library approve the replacement of any statue the state has provided for display in the National Statuary Hall Collection at the United States Capitol; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Chapters 1098 and 1099 of the Acts of Assembly of 2020, the Commission for Historical Statues in the United States Capitol was established to recommend to the General Assembly a replacement statue and to provide for the selection of a sculptor and the submission of the Commonwealth's request to the Joint Committee of Congress on the Library for approval to replace the Robert E. Lee statue in the National Statuary Hall Collection at the United States Capitol; and

WHEREAS, on July 24, 2020, the Commission for Historical Statues in the United States Capitol unanimously approved a motion to recommend that the Robert E. Lee statue be removed from the Statuary Hall Collection at the United States Capitol; and

WHEREAS, on July 31, 2020, the Honorable Governor Ralph S. Northam sent an official letter to the Architect of the Capitol requesting approval to immediately remove the Robert E. Lee statue from the National Statuary Hall Collection at the United States Capitol, and on December 21, 2020, the statue was removed; and

WHEREAS, on December 16, 2020, the Commission for Historical Statues in the United States Capitol recommended that a statue of Barbara Rose Johns should represent the Commonwealth of Virginia in the National Statuary Hall Collection at the United States Capitol; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Joint Committee of Congress on the Library be requested to fill the Commonwealth's vacant spot in the National Statuary Hall Collection at the United States Capitol with a statue to commemorate Barbara Rose Johns. The authorization of the Commonwealth, subject to written approval by the Governor, is in accordance with the recommendation by the Commission for Historical Statues in the United States Capitol.

The subject of the replacement, Barbara Rose Johns of Prince Edward County, was a civil rights hero and organizer of the strike that ignited public school desegregation in the Commonwealth and the United States.

The Commonwealth will select a sculptor, coordinate design of the statue with the Architect of the Capitol, and submit the statue commemorating Barbara Rose Johns for acceptance into and placement in the National Statuary Hall Collection at the United States Capitol as soon as possible.

HOUSE SUBSTITUTE

HJ525H1

2/25/21 16:3

2021 SPECIAL SESSION I

ENROLLED

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 288

Authorizing, and directing the submission to the Joint Committee of Congress on the Library, that the vacant spot of the Commonwealth in the National Statuary Hall Collection at the United States Capitol be filled with a statue to commemorate Barbara Rose Johns.

Agreed to by the Senate, February 3, 2021

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 24, 2021

WHEREAS, pursuant to 2 U.S.C. § 2131, each state is permitted to provide and furnish to the United States Capitol two statues, in marble or bronze, of deceased persons who have been prominent citizens of the state for placement in the National Statuary Hall Collection; and

WHEREAS, currently, Virginia is represented in the National Statuary Hall Collection by George Washington and one vacant position; and

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ENROLLED

SJ288ER