

NO. R-76. Joint Resolution concerning the protection of The Wilderness Civil War battlefield, an historic site important to the State of Vermont, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and all of the United States of America.

(J.R.S.14)

Offered by: Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs,

*Whereas*, the battle of The Wilderness, fought on May 5 and 6, 1864, was one of the largest and most important battles of the Civil War and the first confrontation between General Ulysses S. Grant and General Robert E. Lee, and

*Whereas*, this site, where more than 161,000 Americans were engaged and nearly 29,000 Americans became casualties, is hallowed ground, and

*Whereas*, the story of the Battle of The Wilderness is one of valor for both armies that fought there, and

*Whereas*, the First Vermont Brigade suffered 1,234 casualties on May 5 and 6 in defending the important intersection of the Brock Road and the Plank Road, and

*Whereas*, the State of Vermont has played an important role in the preservation of a key portion of the battlefield, specifically 500 acres within the southwest quadrant of the intersection where the Vermonters fought as part of George Getty's Sixth Corps Division, and

*Whereas*, Vermont has erected a Barre granite monument on that land in tribute to its sons who struggled there, and

*Whereas*, developers plan to construct a big box store, likely to attract ancillary stores, near the intersection of the historic Germanna Plank Road and the Orange Turnpike, on land used as a staging area during the battle, and near the entrance to the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park, and

*Whereas*, such a massive commercial enterprise in this largely rural area would have a negative effect on the entire Wilderness battlefield by occupying historic ground, by making additional road construction and other improvements necessary, and by spurring additional development in and around the battlefield, much of which is preserved as part of the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park, and

*Whereas*, the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission has identified the proposed store site as part of The Wilderness battlefield, and

*Whereas*, the battlefield certainly cannot be moved, *now therefore be it*

*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:*

That the General Assembly of the State of Vermont respectfully asks that the commercial developers find an alternative location for their stores in an area farther from the battlefield that will not have a negative impact on an important historic area, *and be it further*

*Resolved:* That the Vermont General Assembly asks the Orange County (Virginia) Board of Supervisors to continue to protect the area designated as part of the battlefield, and be it further

*Resolved:* That the Vermont General Assembly asks the Governor of Virginia and the House and Senate of the Commonwealth for their assistance in this instance in lending strong support to protecting the historic ground of The Wilderness battlefield that is so important to the history of our state, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the entire nation, and be it further

*Resolved:* That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Governor Timothy Kaine of Virginia, Speaker of the Virginia House of Delegates William J. Howell, Virginia President of the Senate Lieutenant Governor William T. Bolling, President Pro Tempore of the Virginia Senate Charles J. Colgan, the Orange County (Virginia) Board of Supervisors, and to the Vermont Congressional delegation and to Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. President and Chief Executive Officer Mike Duke.