



SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 31

(By Senators Tucker, Barnes, Plymale, Stollings, Unger, Jenkins, Williams, D. Hall, Palumbo, McCabe, Beach and Fitzsimmons)

Recognizing the National Radio Astronomy Observatory's West Virginia Center for STEM Education located in Green Bank, West Virginia, as a preeminent facility for scientific, engineering, machining and STEM education.

Whereas, The National Radio Astronomy Observatory was founded in 1956 to provide state-of-the-art radio telescope facilities for use by the international scientific community to research the universe; and

Whereas, West Virginia's great late Senator Robert C. Byrd secured funding for a radio telescope at Green Bank, and upon the telescope's opening in 2000 the facility was named in his honor; and

Whereas, The 100-m Green Bank Telescope has the largest collecting areas of any fully steerable telescope in the world; and

Whereas, Scientists from around the world use the Green Bank Telescope to observe the skies for more than six thousand hours every year; and

Whereas, The Green Bank Telescope stokes the interest in the skies of over forty thousand visitors per year; and

Whereas, The National Radio Astronomy Observatory has more than fifty years' experience in nationally recognized STEM education programs and activities, currently hosts over three thousand students in educational programs annually and hosts numerous major world class scientific instruments in use on site; and

Whereas, The National Radio Astronomy Observatory is poised to expand its STEM education capabilities within West Virginia; and

Whereas, The State of West Virginia has a vested interest in expanding its STEM educational opportunities to all residents; and

Whereas, The annual economic impact on Pocahontas County equals or exceeds \$29 million and is one of the largest employers within Pocahontas County; and

Whereas, The Green Bank Telescope has received approximately \$119 million from the United States Congress and the National Science Foundation; and

Whereas, The National Science Foundation's Astronomy Portfolio Review Committee recommended in 2012 that the Robert C. Byrd Green Bank Telescope will cease to be funded over a five-year period; therefore, be it

Resolved by the Legislature of West Virginia:

That the Legislature hereby recognizes the National Radio Astronomy Observatory's West Virginia Center for STEM Education located in Green Bank, West Virginia, as a preeminent facility for scientific, engineering, machining and STEM education; and, be it

Further Resolved, That the Legislature recognizes Green Bank STEM Education as an exemplary school for STEM education that will work in conjunction with other STEM-related academies and entities throughout the State of West Virginia; and, be it

Further Resolved, That the Legislature encourages the National Radio Astronomy Observatory's Green Bank facility create an equal partnership with Marshall University and West Virginia University for the purposes noted herein; and, be it

Further Resolved, That the State of West Virginia will seek funding to preserve and enhance the asset, the Robert C. Byrd Green Bank Telescope, for educational and scientific purposes; and, be it

Further Resolved, That the Clerk of the Senate is hereby directed to forward a copy of this resolution to the Robert C. Byrd Green Bank Telescope, Marshall University and West Virginia University.