

**No. R-229. House concurrent resolution commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Bennington College Visual and Performing Arts Center.**

(H.C.R.188)

Offered by Representatives Greer of Bennington, Cooper of Pownal, Corcoran of Bennington, Durfee of Shaftsbury, Morrissey of Bennington, and Nigro of Bennington

Offered by Senators Bongartz and Plunkett

*Whereas*, in 1964, the Bennington College Art Policy Committee embarked on the creation of a unique visual and performing arts center (known as VAPA), and

*Whereas*, Bennington College selected the distinguished American architect, Robertson Ward Jr., who studied at the Harvard Graduate School of Design under Walter Gropius, the famed founder of the Bauhaus School, an innovative German initiative in modern architecture and design, and

*Whereas*, in 1919, Walter Gropius, writing in the publication *Bauhaus Manifesto and Program*, envisioned an artistic edifice “that will unite every discipline, architecture and sculpture and painting, and which will one day rise heavenwards from the million hands of craftsmen...,” and

*Whereas*, these sentiments encapsulated the lofty design aspirations of the committee that more tangibly described “a neutral, open, unfettered, well-lighted space that...will allow large-scale painting and sculpture to be done in comfort...[and]...that will accommodate the mess and confusion of work in progress,” and

*Whereas*, in designing the structure, the architect incorporated Japanese elements that address “the relationship between inside and outside,” and collaborated with Rutgers University sociologist, Dr. Robert Gutman, “to explore ways in which the behavioral sciences [could] contribute to the design of more useful and satisfying buildings,” and

*Whereas*, the building’s structural and mechanical systems remain visible in order to tell the center’s construction story, and

*Whereas*, on May 22, 1976, the 120,000-square-foot VAPA, composed of 20 studio spaces, an annex encompassing four artistic spaces, and other related facilities, was dedicated with the participation of First Lady Betty Ford, who studied dance at Bennington College with the noted dancer Martha Graham, and the first lady addressed the gathering, reminiscing about her time at the college and affixing a plaque to the new building, *now therefore be it*

***Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:***

That the General Assembly commemorates the 50th anniversary of the Bennington College Visual and Performing Arts Center, *and be it further*

***Resolved:*** That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the Bennington College VAPA.