

1 **SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 11**

2 (By Senators Klempa, Yost, Edgell, Kessler (Acting President),
3 Wells, Plymale, McCabe and Beach)

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6
7 Authorizing the placement of a statue of the Honorable Francis
8 Harrison Pierpont at Independence Hall in Wheeling, West
9 Virginia.

10 Whereas, Francis Harrison Pierpont was born near Morgantown
11 and grew up in Western Virginia in what is today Marion County and
12 was linked with the region's history for the rest of his life; and

13 Whereas, Francis Harrison Pierpont graduated from Allegheny
14 College and taught school in Virginia and Mississippi while also
15 studying law. He was admitted to the bar in 1841 and became the
16 local attorney for the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad in 1848; and

17 Whereas, Prior to entering politics Francis Harrison Pierpont
18 also helped found Fairmont Male and Female Seminary, the forerunner
19 to Fairmont State University; and

20 Whereas, Francis Harrison Pierpont was an active supporter of
21 Abraham Lincoln and became involved in politics as an outspoken
22 opponent of Virginia's secession from the Union. When Virginia
23 seceded and entered the war, delegates from the northern and
24 northwestern counties of Virginia, which refused to join the
25 Confederacy, met at the Wheeling Convention. These counties

1 established a separate government in Wheeling with Governor
2 Pierpont becoming the provisional governor; and

3 Whereas, Francis Harrison Pierpont headed the "restored
4 government of Virginia" that drafted a new Virginia Constitution
5 and sent representatives to the Union Congress. In 1862, he
6 attended the Loyal War Governors' Conference in Altoona,
7 Pennsylvania, which ultimately backed Abraham Lincoln's
8 Emancipation Proclamation and the continued Union war effort; and

9 Whereas, Under Francis Harrison Pierpont's leadership, the
10 Wheeling government called for a popular vote on the question of
11 the creation of a new separate state. Popular approval was
12 overwhelming and an application was subsequently made to Congress,
13 which also approved the issue. The new state took the name West
14 Virginia and was admitted into the Union on June 20, 1863; and

15 Whereas, Francis Harrison Pierpont became governor of the
16 "restored" state of Virginia, comprising the several Northern
17 Virginia, Norfolk area, and eastern shore counties under Union
18 control. The capitol of the restored state was established in
19 Alexandria for the remainder of the Civil War. At the end of the
20 war in 1865, President Andrew Johnson appointed Governor Pierpont
21 as the provisional governor of the reunited state of Virginia; and

22 Whereas, Francis Harrison Pierpont followed a policy of
23 forgiveness to those politicians who had served in the Confederate
24 military and government and became one of the key figures in the
25 Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868, which resulted in

1 the "Underwood Constitution" of 1869; and

2 Whereas, Francis Harrison Pierpont subsequently served one
3 term in the West Virginia House of Delegates in 1870 and his last
4 public office was as collector of Internal Revenue under President
5 James Garfield. After his retirement Governor Pierpont helped
6 create the West Virginia Historical Society before dying in
7 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on March 24, 1899. Today he rests at the
8 Woodlawn Cemetery in Fairmont beside his wife Julia and three of
9 his four children; and

10 Whereas, Francis Harrison Pierpont is known as the "Father of
11 West Virginia" and in recognition of his significance to our state
12 history, in 1910 the state donated a marble statue of Pierpont as
13 our second contribution to the United States Capitol's National
14 Statuary Hall Collection; therefore, be it

15 *Resolved by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

16 That the State Senate hereby authorizes the placement of a
17 statue of the Honorable Francis Harrison Pierpont at Independence
18 Hall in Wheeling, West Virginia; and, be it

19 *Further Resolved,* That the statue is to be permanently placed
20 at Independence Hall in Wheeling, West Virginia in gratitude for
21 his service to the State of West Virginia and our great nation.