



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

March 4, 2016

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: House Joint Resolution 797, Designating March 14, in 2015 and in Each Succeeding Year, as a Day of Honor for the Marquis de Lafayette in Virginia

I am pleased to bring to your attention House Joint Resolution 797, passed during the 2015 session of the Virginia General Assembly to designate March 14, of each year, as a Day of Honor for the Marquis de Lafayette in Virginia. HJR 797 can be found at <http://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?151+ful+HJ797>.

On March 14, 1781, 23-year-old Major General Marquis de Lafayette landed at Yorktown, Virginia, to begin a campaign against the British General Cornwallis that would culminate in the British defeat six months later.

Additional information on Lafayette and the Virginia Campaign is available at <http://www.nps.gov/yonb/learn/historyculture/lafayette-and-the-virginia-campaign-1781.htm>.

In the summer of 2015, Lafayette's transatlantic journey was re-enacted by an exact historic reproduction of *L'Hermione*, the French frigate, which brought Lafayette back to the colonies with the pledge of French support.

Lafayette advanced the American cause in France, obtaining pledges of support from King Louis XVI of the French Fleet and 6,000 regular infantry troops. The involvement of France changed the course of the war.

A wreath is laid each year at the bust of Lafayette in the Rotunda of the Capitol. This year's wreath will be laid by the French Consul to the United States. The ceremony will take place at 10:30 a.m. on March 14, 2016. The public is invited.

For more information about House Joint Resolution 797, please contact Christonya Brown, coordinator for history and social science, Office of Humanities and Early Childhood, by e-mail at Christonya.Brown@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 225-2893.

SRS/CB/vdg