SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

By: Senator Conway
Constitutional Requirements Complied with for Introduction in the last 35 Days of Session
Introduced and read first time: March 10, 2008
Assigned to: Rules

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

A Senate Joint Resolution concerning

Birth of Enoch Pratt – Bicentennial Celebration

FOR the purpose of requesting the Governor to dedicate 2008, the bicentennial of the birth of Enoch Pratt, to the memory and honor of Enoch Pratt.

WHEREAS, In 1848, Enoch Pratt became a patron of the Maryland Institute for the Promotion of the Mechanic Arts, known today as the Maryland Institute College of Art, and donated its landmark bell and clock tower; and

WHEREAS, From 1848 through 1893, Enoch Pratt served as a Trustee of the First Unitarian Church of Baltimore, served as the Treasurer of the church from 1848 through 1860, and served as the President of the church for many years thereafter; and

WHEREAS, In 1854, Enoch Pratt began service as a Director of the Philadelphia, Wilmington & Baltimore Railroad, eventually serving as Vice President of the railroad; and

WHEREAS, In 1857, Enoch Pratt became a member of the Board of the Spring Grove Asylum; and

WHEREAS, In 1859, Enoch Pratt began service as a Treasurer of the Board of Trustees of the Peabody Institute and served on the Board of Trustees for many years thereafter; and

WHEREAS, In 1860, Enoch Pratt was elected President of the Farmers’ and Planter’s National Bank, serving for 36 years, in addition to his service as President of the Baltimore Clearing House and the Maryland Bankers Association; and
WHEREAS, During the Civil War, Enoch Pratt supported the United States
government with supplies and transportation and invested a considerable amount of
his personal assets in United States government bonds; and

WHEREAS, In 1865, Enoch Pratt endowed a free school for boys and girls in his
birthplace of Middleborough, Massachusetts, stipulating that it should have a
“circulating library...for the free use of all the inhabitants....”; and

WHEREAS, In 1867, Enoch Pratt assisted in founding the Maryland Asylum for
the Deaf and Dumb, known today as the Maryland School for the Deaf, and served as
President of the Board; and

WHEREAS, In 1870, Enoch Pratt donated his farm of 752 acres in Prince
George’s County, known as Cheltenham, to the House of Reformation and Instruction
for Colored Children, which began operation in 1873, and he served as President of the
Board of Governors for many years thereafter; and

WHEREAS, In 1870, Enoch Pratt established the Workingman’s Institute and
Library in the neighborhood of Canton in Baltimore City; and

WHEREAS, In 1872, Enoch Pratt purchased the Maryland Steamboat
Company, giving him control of Chesapeake Bay boat traffic, in addition to serving as
a Director of the Susquehanna Canal Company for more than 25 years; and

WHEREAS, In 1877, Enoch Pratt began many years of service as a Municipal
Finance Commissioner in Baltimore City; and

WHEREAS, In 1879, Enoch Pratt donated a substantial amount of money and
all the building materials for the building of the parish hall at the First Independent
Church, known today as the First Unitarian Church of Baltimore, at 514 N. Charles
Street in Baltimore City; and

WHEREAS, After many years of personal research and study, Enoch Pratt
established the public library system in Baltimore, the Enoch Pratt Free Library, with
a main library and four branches, and he donated $1,250,000 to Baltimore City for the
library on the condition that Baltimore City continue to fund the library in perpetuity; and

WHEREAS, In 1884, with the assistance of Enoch Pratt, the Baltimore Home
for Incurables, known today as the Keswick Home for Incurables, was founded; and

WHEREAS, In 1891, Enoch Pratt donated property to build the Unitarian
Church in Middleborough, Massachusetts; and

WHEREAS, In 1892, Enoch Pratt deeded the Hoffman estate at the corner of
Cathedral and Franklin Streets to the Maryland Academy of Sciences, which today
operates the Maryland Science Center in Baltimore City; and
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WHEREAS, In 1893, Enoch Pratt donated the Henry Niemann organ to the First Independent Church in honor of the 75th anniversary of the founding of the church; and

WHEREAS, Enoch Pratt died on September 19, 1896, and his bequests included the Meadville Theological School, known today as the Meadville Lombard Theological School in Chicago, a church and library in his birthplace of Middleborough, Massachusetts, the Boys’ Home Society of Baltimore, and the Sheppard Asylum, known today as the Sheppard and Enoch Pratt Hospital; and

WHEREAS, In March, 1882, the General Assembly of Maryland adopted a joint resolution resolving “...that the name of Enoch Pratt be added to the list of those public benefactors whom the people of Maryland will hold in perpetual and grateful remembrance; and it is further resolved, that in placing this acknowledgement and tribute upon the permanent records of the State it is the desire and purpose of the General Assembly not merely to signify their appreciation of a great and disinterested public service, but especially to honor a conspicuous example of the patriotism and public spirit which give to wealth its largest dignity and lift it to its highest uses.”; and

WHEREAS, The First Unitarian Church of Baltimore is coordinating the 2008 celebration of the bicentennial of the birth of Enoch Pratt and, in September, 2008, will formally dedicate the parish hall of the church to be the Enoch Pratt Parish Hall; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Governor dedicate 2008, the bicentennial of the birth of Enoch Pratt, to the memory and honor of Enoch Pratt in recognition of the significance of the many institutions throughout Maryland that bear his name and the ongoing impact of his philanthropy throughout the State 200 years after his birth; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of Legislative Services to the Honorable Martin O’Malley, Governor of Maryland; the Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr., President of the Senate of Maryland; and the Honorable Michael E. Busch, Speaker of the House of Delegates.