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Statement by Representative Gerald E. Connolly In Recognition of the PTA and PTSA Student Honorees

MR. CONNOLLY: Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of several students in Northern Virginia. These students have participated and excelled in programs administered by their local Parent Teacher Associations and Parent Teacher Student Associations.

Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) and Parent Teacher Student Associations (PTSAs) serve a critical role in helping to provide the best possible educational environment for our students. The Northern Virginia District PTA consists of a region with more than 220 schools. Schools located throughout Northern Virginia are consistently recognized as being among the very best schools in our country. I strongly believe one factor in the excellent education received by our students is the high level of involvement and encouragement provided by parents through the PTA and PTSAs.

I am pleased to congratulate the following students on being recognized by the National PTA and Virginia PTA for their outstanding achievements:

2010 DISTRICT PTA CITIZENSHIP ESSAY AWARDS – High School Division: Trisha Hajela (10th Grade, Centreville High School), and Katherine DeFazio (12th Grade, James Madison High School)

2010 DISTRICT PTA CITIZENSHIP ESSAY AWARDS – Middle School Division: Bennett Casciano (7th Grade, South County Secondary School), and Cali Willcockson (8th Grade, Liberty Middle School)

The 2010 PTA Reflections National PTA Nominees are:

DANCE CHOREOGRAPHY: Primary Division – Claire de la Paz (2nd Grade, Herndon Elementary School PTA) for her dance performance titled “Free Bird”

LITERATURE: Middle/Junior Division – Eliza Malakoff, (7th Grade George Washington Middle School PTA) for her insightful essay titled “No Beauty?”

MUSIC COMPOSITION: Intermediate Division - Kyle Gatesman, (4th Grade, Canterbury Woods Elementary School PTA) for his musical composition titled “Reflections In Color: Variations on a Theme”

VISUAL ART: Primary Division- Hannah Cadenazzi, (1st Grade, Great Falls Elementary School PTA) for her interpretative painting titled “Family”

VISUAL ART: Intermediate Division – Brittney Fogg, (5th Grade, Willow Springs Elementary School PTA) for her authentic drawing titled “Beauty is worth looking for”

VISUAL ART: Middle/Junior Division – Jiwhae Choi, (8th Grade, Rachel Carson Middle School) for the multi faceted vision of “Beauty is never giving up”

2009 NATIONAL PTA AWARD OF EXCELLENCE: William Park, (12th Grade, Langley High School), who was recognized at an awards reception at the Department of Energy on January 16.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join with me today to recognize the outstanding achievements of these students. I also ask that we recognize the Northern Virginia District PTA, in partnership with the Virginia PTA, as they work diligently to develop the diversity of talents and skills of students attending schools throughout Northern Virginia. It gives me great pleasure to acknowledge the achievements of these students and the Parent Teacher Associations that support them.