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Be sure and cast your vote in the 2004 Democratic Primary to be held Tuesday, February 10. Candidates seeking to win the Virginia Primary (and its 84 delegates out of a total 2,161 needed to win the nomination) include **John Kerry** (US Senator; Massachusetts), **Howard Dean** (Governor; Vermont), **John Edwards** (US Senator; North Carolina), **Wesley Clark** (Retired Army General), the Rev. **Al Sharpton** (Civil Rights Activist), and **Dennis Kucinich** (US Representative; Ohio).

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**Government**

## Resolution Designates April as Confederate History Month

By Michael Glennon  
 Capital News Service

April would now and hereafter be designated Confederate History and Heritage Month in Virginia, under a resolution sponsored by Sen. Charles R. Hawkins, R-Chatham.

The resolution, which passed the scrutiny of the Senate Rules Committee on Friday [Jan. 30], also urges state officials to "call this observance to the attention of all of our citizens."

"We are losing our history," Hawkins said. "We need to be aware of the prices we paid."

The resolution describes the Confederate States of America's "four-year struggle for independence and sovereign rights."

The question arose as to whether the phrase "sovereign rights" could be considered offensive or an allusion to slavery.

"This is not about racism," Hawkins said. "It is about the 628,000 who lost their lives in this

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war."

Brag Bowling, Virginia division commander of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, and Fred Taylor, commander of the group's Camp 1702, spoke on behalf of the bill.

Asked whether the name might be changed to "Civil War History and Heritage Month," Taylor said that would be a dishonor to Confederate veterans.

The Rev. Wilson Shannon, pastor of First Baptist Church of Centralia in Chester, said, "We know it is time to celebrate history with parity. We've celebrated Black History Month for many years.

"There is pain when we investigate the past, but there is also pride."

With the blessing of the Rules Committee, the resolution now goes to the full Senate. If it passes the Senate and the House, it would go to Gov. Mark Warner, who has the option of vetoing the resolution.

Warner has declined to designate a Confederate history month.

"The issuance of a Confederate history month proclamation has been a lightning rod," the governor said in 2002. "My belief is that signing such a proclamation would not advance the healing process."

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