

SR-213, As Adopted by Senate, December 19, 2014

Senator Richardville offered the following resolution:

Senate Resolution No. 213.

A resolution honoring John Varvatos.

Whereas, John Varvatos is a Michigan-born, world-famous contemporary menswear designer, who plans to open a store in Downtown Detroit in the spring of 2015. His goal is to bring national and international fashion people and designers into Detroit; and

Whereas, John Varvatos, born in Detroit and raised in Allen Park, graduated from the Fashion Institute of Technology at Allen Park High School. After high school, Varvatos would go on to attend Eastern Michigan University and the University of Michigan. It was his roots in Michigan and spending time in the melting pot of Detroit that influenced his groundbreaking menswear designs which have earned him multiple accolades; and

Whereas, Varvatos had a passion for clothes from an early age. He began working at clothing stores before he could get a driver's license and would continue to work in the fashion industry and men's clothing stores throughout college. After graduation, he opened his own store in Grand Rapids called Fitzgeralds, which is still open today; and

Whereas, In 1983, Varvatos took a job with Ralph Lauren as a regional sales manager and would eventually rise to head of sales. Following his career at Ralph Lauren, he joined Calvin Klein as head of design for the men's clothing division, where he is credited with creating boxer briefs, which have been called one of the greatest apparel revolutions of the century. Varvatos would later return to Ralph Lauren as head of design, where he started the Polo Jeans label; and

Whereas, He started his own company in 1999 and opened his first freestanding store in 2000 in the SoHo neighborhood of New York City in the former CBGB music club. He now has 17 stores in three different countries; and

Whereas, Varvatos has been presented with numerous honors, including multiple Designer of the Year awards from the Council of Fashion Designers of America, Gentleman's Quarterly Designer of the Year award, and having a special edition of the Chrysler 300C named in his honor. He was also named to the cast of the hit television show "Fashion Star" as a celebrity mentor; and

Whereas, Varvatos is a music aficionado, influenced by Motown, blues, jazz, rock and funk, all of which were popular while he was growing up in Michigan. His passion for music has carried over into a philanthropic mission with the VH1 Save the Music Foundation, which seeks to restore and sustain instrumental music programs in schools across the county. To date, they have helped fund and restore 1,400 programs in 80 communities; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we offer this expression of our highest tribute to honor John Varvatos for his achievements on and off the runway and as a token of our appreciation for representing the state of Michigan proudly; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to John Varvatos as evidence of our highest esteem.