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[Photos and videos are available on request.]

The Only Festival of Its Kind Didn't Just Happen. It Hit.

Virginia House of Delegates Commends Better Said Than Done as Women's Storytelling Festival Builds Momentum

March 30, 2026 -- Fairfax, VA — As Women's History Month comes to a close, one Virginia-based organization didn't just celebrate it. It helped define it.

During the festival's March 19–22 run, Delegate Holly Seibold (D-12) presented a formal commendation from the Virginia House of Delegates, recognizing Better Said Than Done for its "singular contribution to the art of spoken word storytelling" and its commitment to elevating women's voices.

The recognition came at the culmination of a four-day festival featuring 41 performances, 21 storytellers, and six emcees across three live shows in Fairfax City and a virtual showcase streamed nationwide. The lineup included Fairfax Mayor Catherine Read, Delegate Seibold, and Jenn White, host of NPR's *1A*, underscoring the festival's growing reach and relevance.

One of the most powerful moments wasn't from a performer. It came from the person presenting the proclamation.

Years before becoming an elected official, Delegate Seibold attended a Better Said Than Done workshop led by Executive Director Jessica Robinson. At the time, she feared public speaking. That experience pushed her "outside her comfort zone", something she now credits as part of her journey to public office.

"Women have great stories to tell," Seibold said in presenting the resolution to Robinson. "I've always been grateful for Jessica and what she does, and the stories that are told by the storytellers who are part of this community."

The proclamation itself speaks to something bigger than a single event, recognizing storytelling as one of the world's oldest art forms, with the power to "build empathy and connect people to their shared humanity," and highlighting the festival's role in bringing women's voices to the forefront.

That mission has been at the heart of the festival from the start.

“The Women’s Storytelling Festival began because I saw a gap in representation that needed to be filled,” said Robinson. “We didn’t create it to be recognized. But to be honored by the Commonwealth, and to have built something first of its kind here in Virginia, is incredibly meaningful.”

Now in its seventh year, the festival remains the nation’s first and only storytelling festival dedicated exclusively to women performers. Storytellers traveled as far as Ireland and from all over the US to bring perspectives that span personal narrative, folklore, history, and lived experience.

That impact is being recognized well beyond the region.

Rishi Nixon, Executive Director of the National Storytelling Network, described the festival as “a national institution in the American storytelling community,” crediting its role in strengthening storytelling “in its most vital form” and elevating it beyond performance into something more enduring.

And it’s not just industry voices saying it. It’s coming from the audience as well.

“This was one of the most amazing and impactful events I have ever attended,” wrote one audience member. “The stories were fantastic... I am still thinking about them. They will live with me for a long time.”

For Better Said Than Done, the festival isn’t the finish line. It’s proof of what’s possible.

And what comes next is already on the calendar.

A live storytelling show returns on April 25 at Clare & Don’s Beach Shack, followed by workshops on April 29 and May 7 to help new storytellers find and share their voices. Recordings from the Women’s Storytelling Festival are also available through the end of April.

Learn more, register for events, or watch the festival recordings at:

<https://bettersaidthandone.org/events/>

Because when women tell the story, it doesn’t just sound different. It hits.

Full Text of the Resolution Follows

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 229

Commending Better Said Than Done, Inc.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 9, 2026

WHEREAS, Better Said Than Done, Inc., created the Women's Storytelling Festival in 2020 as the nation's first and only storytelling festival devoted to women; and

WHEREAS, Better Said Than Done recognizes that the tradition of spoken word storytelling, one of the world's oldest art forms, has the power to build empathy and connect people to their shared humanity; and

WHEREAS, Better Said Than Done aspires to support women storytellers who bring unique and essential perspectives and lived experiences to the art of storytelling, whether they are sharing folktales, fairytales, historical tales, or true personal stories; and

WHEREAS, Better Said Than Done aims to address the shortcoming of existing storytelling festivals, which keep this art form alive by enchanting and inspiring new generations of audiences, but which often underrepresent women and gender-expansive storytellers in their programming; and

WHEREAS, for three days in March each year, Better Said Than Done's Women's Storytelling Festival brings the nation's best women storytellers, as well as emerging artists, to the Commonwealth to build community, promote empathy, and entertain audience members through events that may be attended either in-person or virtually through livestreaming; and

WHEREAS, by organizing the Women's Storytelling Festival, Better Said Than Done has nurtured the Commonwealth's own singular contribution to the art of spoken word storytelling and elevated women's voices in the national conversation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That Better Said Than Done, Inc., hereby be commended for the achievements of its annual Women's Storytelling Festival; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Jessica Robinson, executive director of Better Said Than Done, Inc., as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for the

organization's contributions to storytelling and women's empowerment in the Commonwealth and beyond.

House Patron: Seibold

Clerk of the House of Delegates