

1 HR1001  
2 122050-1  
3 By Representatives DeMarco and Canfield  
4 RFD:  
5 First Read: 21-APR-10

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8 RECOGNIZING THE 100th ANNIVERSARY OF SAINT ELIAS  
9 MARONITE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA.

10  
11 WHEREAS, Saint Elias Maronite Catholic Church was  
12 established in 1910 in Birmingham, Alabama; and

13 WHEREAS, Saint Elias Maronite Catholic Church was  
14 established to serve a growing population of people, primarily  
15 from Lebanon, who had immigrated to Birmingham and wished to  
16 practice their ancestral Maronite Catholic Rite, which  
17 includes the use of Aramaic (the language of Christ) in its  
18 liturgy, while maintaining the same essentials as other Rites  
19 of the Roman Catholic Church; and

20 WHEREAS, the original building that served as Saint  
21 Elias was located in downtown Birmingham on Sixth Avenue South  
22 between 20th and 21st Streets and was dedicated in 1914 in  
23 honor of Saint Elias, the "patron of the villages from which  
24 the faithful came"; and

25 WHEREAS, Saint Elias relocated to a new site on  
26 Eighth Street between 8th and 9th Avenues South in 1950, with

1 the first Mass in the new Church offered on Christmas Day that  
2 year; and

3 WHEREAS, Chorbishop Richard D. Saad has been part of  
4 the Saint Elias Parish as a priest since 1972 and continues as  
5 its Pastor today; and

6 WHEREAS, during 2010, Saint Elias will host the  
7 annual National Apostolate of Maronites ("NAM") Convention in  
8 Birmingham for the third time since 1972, bringing Maronite  
9 Catholics from across the country to Birmingham; and

10 WHEREAS, many ordinations have been held at Saint  
11 Elias during its first 100 years, including the ordination of  
12 its Chorbishop, and the ordinations of a number of deacons and  
13 priests; one of these priests is currently serving the  
14 Catholic Church in the Vatican; and

15 WHEREAS, Saint Elias is a vibrant, growing Maronite  
16 Catholic Church, committed to its Mission, its parishioners,  
17 and the surrounding community; and

18 WHEREAS, Chorbishop Saad and members of St. Elias  
19 make semi-annual visits to Maronite Catholics outside of the  
20 Birmingham community, in particular to Mobile, Alabama, to  
21 celebrate the Maronite Catholic Mass with Maronite Catholics  
22 who do not have a local church under this Rite; and

23 WHEREAS, members of Saint Elias make important  
24 contributions to the broader Birmingham community and State of  
25 Alabama as public servants, business leaders, teachers,  
26 professionals and in many other roles; and

1           WHEREAS, Saint Elias continues to sponsor religious  
2 education, language classes, lectures on family health, parish  
3 picnics, and Wednesday Family nights; and

4           WHEREAS, for over 10 years Saint Elias has conducted  
5 its Lebanese Food and Cultural Festival which, over two days  
6 each year, is attended by more than 7,000 people from across  
7 Birmingham, with over \$170,000 in proceeds being donated to  
8 different charities; and

9           WHEREAS, in preparation for its centennial  
10 celebration, Saint Elias began its "Faith. Family. Heritage"  
11 Capital Campaign in 2009 which has led to a complete  
12 renovation of the Church, a new Church entrance, and the  
13 construction of a Grotto and Columbarium; and

14           WHEREAS, Saint Elias has established a Foundation to  
15 ensure the future of the Parish facilities for generations to  
16 come; and

17           WHEREAS, Saint Elias has grown in its 100 years to  
18 over 1,200 parishioners and over 400 families; now therefore,

19           BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF  
20 THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, That in recognition of a century  
21 of support and contributions to its members and to the broader  
22 community of Birmingham, commendations are extended to Saint  
23 Elias Maronite Catholic Church and its members, and this  
24 resolution is offered in highest tribute to the Church and its  
25 members, along with heartiest congratulations on the  
26 celebration of Saint Elias' 100th Anniversary during 2010.