

1 HJR40
2 204986-1
3 By Representatives Clarke, Drummond, Jones (S), Bracy, Brown
4 (C), Gaston, Pringle, Wilcox, Stringer and Simpson
5 RFD: Rules
6 First Read: 18-FEB-20

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8 CELEBRATING THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CREOLE
9 STEAM FIRE COMPANY NUMBER ONE.

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11 WHEREAS, Creole Steam Fire Company No. 1 was
12 established in April of 1819 as the first volunteer fire
13 company in Mobile, Alabama; and

14 WHEREAS, it was created for the purpose of
15 protecting life and property and played a vital role in
16 safeguarding Mobile during its early stages as a city; it
17 served as a model for the implementation of other volunteer
18 firehouses established between 1819 and 1888; and

19 WHEREAS, Creole Steam Fire Company No. 1 was founded
20 and operated by Creoles, a community of mixed-race persons of
21 French, Spanish, African, and Native American ancestry, who
22 also formed their own schools, churches, businesses, and
23 social organizations; and

24 WHEREAS, Creole Steam Fire Company No. 1 used
25 horse-drawn equipment until 1924; its volunteers were usually
26 first to arrive on the scene to many blazes because it

1 utilized retired racehorses, including "Jack," the horse whose
2 unique sense of smell could lead them directly to fires; and

3 WHEREAS, in 1869, a two-story brick building
4 designed by architect James H. Hutchisson, was erected at 13
5 North Dearborn Street to accommodate Creole Steam Fire Company
6 No. 1; the firehouse featured an arched central bay and
7 full-height second-floor windows, and was considered the
8 center of Creole Society until 1926 when Central Fire Station
9 was built in Mobile; and

10 WHEREAS, Creole Steam Fire Company No. 1 volunteers
11 became some of the original professional firefighters of the
12 Mobile Fire Department created in September of 1888; and

13 WHEREAS, Creole Steam Fire Company No. 1 was
14 virtually absorbed into the Mobile Fire Department in 1888, it
15 was allowed to continue having some autonomy to hire its own
16 employees until the company was disbanded in 1970; and

17 WHEREAS, the historic firehouse building with its
18 fireman's pole is still intact, and is currently a private
19 residence; this landmark structure is along the Dauphin Street
20 Historic Walking Tour and the Dora Franklin Finley
21 African-American Heritage Trail; and

22 WHEREAS, a bicentennial celebration was held at the
23 Creole Steam Fire Company No. 1 on December 23, 2019; honorees
24 included the following retired firefighters who transitioned
25 from the company to the Mobile Fire Department: Cecil Bush,
26 Michael Chestang, Claude Doublet, Tony Gayle, Raymond
27 Henningburg, and Edward Otis; and

1 WHEREAS, other firefighters who were among the last
2 to serve at Creole Steam Fire Company No. 1 were the late
3 Vernon Chestang, Vincent Collins, Eugene Fisher, Henry Hafler,
4 Leon Petite, Clovis Reid, Govan Trenier, Jerome Treiner, Mark
5 Trenier, Sr., Paul Trenier, Alfred Watson, Harold Woods, and
6 Willie Wright; now therefore

7 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH
8 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That The Creole Steam Fire Company
9 No. 1 volunteer fire station is recognized and commended on
10 its 200th year anniversary and its important historical role
11 in Mobile and the State of Alabama.