

## SJR91 INTRODUCED



1 SJR91

2 CXVTFJJ-1

3 By Senators Coleman, Albritton, Allen, Barfoot, Beasley, Bell,  
4 Butler, Carnley, Chambliss, Chesteen, Coleman-Madison,  
5 Elliott, Figures, Givhan, Gudger, Hatcher, Hovey, Jones,  
6 Kelley, Kitchens, Livingston, Melson, Orr, Price, Roberts,  
7 Sessions, Shelnutt, Singleton, Smitherman, Stewart, Stutts,  
8 Waggoner, Weaver, Williams

9 RFD:

10 First Read: 06-May-25



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4 SJR\_\_\_\_\_ RECOGNIZING MAY 6TH AS THE BIRTHDAY OF ALABAMA'S  
5 BASEBALL GIANT, WILLIAM HOWARD MAYS, JR.  
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7 WHEREAS, William "Willie" Howard Mays, Jr. was born  
8 on May 6, 1931, in the former town of Westfield, in  
9 Jefferson County, Alabama in 1931, and began playing  
10 baseball at an early age with his father, "Cat" Mays; and

11 WHEREAS, Willie was a standout multi-sport athlete at  
12 Fairfield Industrial High School, leading the basketball  
13 team in scoring, playing multiple positions on the football  
14 team, and showcasing his natural talent for baseball; and

15 WHEREAS, in 1948, he began his professional baseball  
16 career at the age of 16 in the Negro American League, 11  
17 years before the complete integration of Major League  
18 Baseball in 1959; and

19 WHEREAS, in 1948, Mays recorded his first  
20 professional hit at Rickwood Field in Birmingham, Alabama,  
21 while playing for the Birmingham Black Barons, and used his  
22 outstanding fielding, batting, and base running ability to  
23 help lead the team to the 1948 Negro World Series; and

24 WHEREAS, in 1950, he signed a contract with the New  
25 York Giants after graduating from Fairfield Industrial High  
26 School, spent a brief year in the minor leagues, and was  
27 quickly called up to play his first game for the New York  
28 Giants on May 24, 1951; and



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29           WHEREAS, in 1951, he was voted the National League  
30   Rookie of the Year after recording 68 runs batted in and 20  
31   home runs in 121 games; and

32           WHEREAS, from 1952 to 1954, Willie was drafted into  
33   the Army and served the United States during the Korean War;  
34   during his military service, he spent most of his time in  
35   the Army at Fort Eustis, Virginia, as an athletic instructor  
36   and played baseball for the Fort Eustis Wheels; and

37           WHEREAS, after Mays finished his service in the Army,  
38   he returned to help the New York Giants win the 1954 World  
39   Series by robbing a Cleveland batter of a go-ahead run with  
40   an implausible basket catch in deep center field to win game  
41   one of the 1954 World Series, in a moment that will be  
42   forever remembered as "The Catch"; and

43           WHEREAS, he earned a remarkable number of awards and  
44   accolades throughout his career in Major League Baseball,  
45   including 24 All-Star Game selections, two National League  
46   Most Valuable Player Awards, 12 Gold Glove Awards, and four  
47   National League home run leader titles; and

48           WHEREAS, Willie achieved a .302 lifetime batting  
49   average while recording 3,293 hits, 660 home runs, and a  
50   Major League Baseball all-time record of 7,112 putouts from  
51   the outfield; he is the only player in Major League Baseball  
52   history with more than 300 home runs, 300 stolen bases,  
53   3,000 career hits, and a career batting average greater than  
54   .300; his accomplishments were not fully recognized until  
55   2024, when Major League Baseball incorporated the statistics  
56   from the Negro American League into the Major League



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Baseball historical records; and

WHEREAS, in 1979, Mays was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame on his first ballot; as a tribute to the indelible impact and enduring legacy of Mays, the San Francisco Giants and New York Mets retired his jersey number 24; the address of the stadium of the San Francisco Giants is 24 Willie Mays Plaza, in recognition of the contributions and impact that Mays had on the San Francisco Giants organization throughout his life; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, Willie was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest honor the President can award to a civilian; and

WHEREAS, Willie Mays died on June 18, 2024; he personified the American Dream by relying on his relentless work ethic and determination to become an immortal giant of baseball, all while inspiring millions of people; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That in recognition of what would have been his 94th Birthday, William "Willie" Howard Mays, Jr. is honored for his hard work and sacrifice, recognized for his inspiration to future generations, and celebrated for his historic feats achieved while playing the game he loved.