

HJR261 INTRODUCED



1 HJR261
2 XDMBPZE-1
3 By Representative Clarke
4 RFD: Rules
5 First Read: 17-Mar-26



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4 HJR___ CELEBRATING THE COMMONWEALTH NATIONAL BANK'S 50 YEARS
5 OF SERVICE TO THE MOBILE COMMUNITY.
6

7 WHEREAS, with sincere respect and great appreciation,
8 we celebrate the Commonwealth National Bank's 50 years of
9 service to the Mobile community; and

10 WHEREAS, in February 2026, Commonwealth National Bank
11 marked a historic milestone; Commonwealth's story is one of
12 vision, perseverance, community ownership, and an unwavering
13 belief that financial inclusion and access to capital is
14 fundamental to economic mobility and generational wealth;
15 from its earliest days, Commonwealth was a bank created by
16 the people, for the people; and

17 WHEREAS, Commonwealth National Bank was founded
18 during a time when discriminatory lending practices excluded
19 Black families, small businesses, and low to moderate-income
20 communities from access to credit; the idea for the bank
21 came from a conversation among community leaders who
22 suggested organizing a bank that would truly serve the
23 people of Mobile; and

24 WHEREAS, after years of planning, organizing, and
25 community dedication, Commonwealth received its national
26 charter on February 19, 1976; the bank was originally known
27 as The People's Bank, a name that reflected its original
28 purpose and philosophy; and



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29 WHEREAS, the bank first operated out of the Franklin
30 Building on Davis Avenue before relocating to St. Stephens
31 Road, where Commonwealth's main branch proudly stands today;
32 what has remained consistent is the belief that unity,
33 shared ownership, and community trust can build something
34 lasting; and

35 WHEREAS, over the past 50 years, Commonwealth
36 National Bank has loaned more than \$500 million directly to
37 the Mobile community; that capital has supported families,
38 first-time homeowners, small businesses, nonprofits, and
39 community-serving organizations, often when traditional
40 financial institutions would not; and

41 WHEREAS, today, Commonwealth is one of only 14
42 Black-owned and operated banks in the United States, one of
43 just four nationally chartered Black-owned banks, Mobile's
44 only hometown national bank, and a federally certified
45 Community Development Financial Institution; Patrick Cooper,
46 Chair and majority shareholder, is the son of original
47 director J. Gary Cooper, carrying forward the same
48 commitment to community that defined the bank's beginnings;
49 and

50 WHEREAS, those who were instrumental to the early
51 success of Commonwealth National Bank include founding Chair
52 George Langham, James Buskey, Wiley Butler, J. Gary Cooper,
53 Gerald Ellis, William Franklin, Sr., Betty Jordan, John
54 Langham, Eddie Lawson, Eugene Moseley, William Owen, William
55 Powell, Timothy Russell, Sr., Helen Sigler, Shafter Summers,
56 Willie Threadgill, Fred Torrance, and Ocie Wheat; and



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57 WHEREAS, under the steady leadership of Commonwealth
58 President and CEO Sidney King, the bank celebrates its
59 golden anniversary with a focus on the future; today's
60 Commonwealth has two growing branches and combines its
61 historic mission with modern banking tools; now therefore,

62 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH
63 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That we honor Commonwealth's
64 founders, its original directors, officers, and early staff
65 who laid the foundation for a legacy that continues to this
66 day, and we commend Commonwealth's current leadership for
67 continuing to invest locally, empower families, support
68 entrepreneurs, and strengthen the fabric of Mobile's
69 communities.