

2016 SESSION

INTRODUCED

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HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 241

Offered March 9, 2016

Commending Virginia Engine Company No. 9.

Patrons—McClellan, Bagby, Carr and McQuinn

WHEREAS, on July 1, 1950, the first professional African American firefighters hired by a city fire department in the Commonwealth were stationed at Virginia Engine Company No. 9 in Richmond; and

WHEREAS, the 10 African American firefighters were selected from a pool of 500 applicants and assigned to Virginia Engine Company No. 9, which was then at the intersection of Fifth Street and Duval Street; and

WHEREAS, the members of Virginia Engine Company No. 9, including the last living member, Bernard Lewis, built a lasting legacy of loyalty and dedication as they sought to safeguard the lives and property of Richmond residents; and

WHEREAS, Harvey S. Hicks, one of the 10 firefighters, became the first African American fire captain in Richmond in 1961; the City of Richmond fully integrated city fire departments after the death of Harvey Hicks and another firefighter, Douglas P. Evans, during a rescue in 1963; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Engine Company No. 9 station was demolished in 1968, but the contributions of its trailblazing firefighters live on in the dedication to duty and care for the community demonstrated by public safety officers throughout Richmond and the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, Engine Company No. 9 and Associates, Inc., a community services organization in Richmond, was established to cultivate and promote fellowship, friendship, and mutual support between retired public safety officials and residents of the Richmond area; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That Virginia Engine Company No. 9 hereby be commended on the occasion of the 65th anniversary of the hiring of the first African American firefighters by a city fire department in the Commonwealth; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Engine Company No. 9 and Associates, Inc., as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for Virginia Engine Company No. 9's significant contributions to the Civil Rights movement in Richmond.

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HR241