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**HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 686**

Offered January 9, 2019

Prefiled January 9, 2019

*Commending Arlington County Fire Department Station 8.*

Patrons—Sullivan, Bagby, Adams, D.M., Aird, Ayala, Carr, Carroll Foy, Cole, Convirs-Fowler, Davis, Delaney, Filler-Corn, Gooditis, Hayes, Heretick, Herring, Hope, James, Jones, J.C., Keam, Kory, Krizek, Levine, Lindsey, Lopez, McQuinn, Mullin, Murphy, Plum, Price, Rasoul, Rodman, Roem, Sickles, Simon, Thomas, Torian, Turpin, Tyler, Ward, Ware and Watts; Senators: Dance, Ebbin, Favola, Howell, Marsden, McPike, Saslaw and Spruill

WHEREAS, Arlington County Fire Department Station 8, once the only fire company in Arlington staffed by African Americans, has safeguarded the lives and property of local residents for 100 years; and

WHEREAS, Arlington County Fire Department Station 8 traces its roots to the formation of Hall's Hill Volunteer Fire Department in 1918, which was established by a group of concerned residents of the Hall's Hill neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, Hall's Hill Volunteer Fire Department was among the first volunteer firefighting companies in what would become Arlington County and one of the first in the nation to be owned and operated by African Americans; and

WHEREAS, in its early days, the members of Hall's Hill Volunteer Fire Department fought fires with a 60-gallon chemical tank that needed to be pulled by six men; the Department purchased its first motor-driven fire engine with help from the community in 1926; and

WHEREAS, Hall's Hill Volunteer Fire Department was officially incorporated the following year and subsequently relocated to a lot on Lee Highway; the Department received its first pumper truck in 1932, after Arlington County began to purchase equipment for volunteer fire companies; and

WHEREAS, in 1934, Hall's Hill Volunteer Fire Department moved to a new fire station on North Culpeper Street on land donated by the Hicks family, which served as a community meeting place and offered conveniences such as a pay telephone and a soda machine; and

WHEREAS, during the 1940s and 1950s, Hall's Hill Volunteer Fire Department became Station 8 in the unified Arlington County Fire Department; the company continued to modernize its equipment, and in 1951, the first four African American professional firefighters hired by the county were assigned to Station 8; and

WHEREAS, as a segregated department during the Jim Crow era, the members of Station 8 faced discrimination and were occasionally disallowed from responding to certain calls; in 1957, Station 8's Alfred Clark paved the way for his fellow African American firefighters as the first black fire captain in Arlington County; and

WHEREAS, in 1963, Station 8 opened its current firehouse at 4845 Lee Highway, where it ably served Arlington residents for more than 50 years; and

WHEREAS, Station 8 was nearly moved due to a reorganization, but members of the community rallied to preserve the history and heritage of Hall's Hill Volunteer Fire Department, and in 2016, planning began for a new Station 8 firehouse at the same location; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Arlington County Fire Department Station 8 on the occasion of its 100th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Arlington County Fire Department Station 8 as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the fire company's legacy of contributions to the Arlington community.

INTRODUCED

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