

2023 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 472

Commending the Blacksburg Fire Department on its 100th Anniversary.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 24, 2023

WHEREAS, the Blacksburg Volunteer Fire Department was founded by volunteer citizens of the Town of Blacksburg in 1922 with little more than their dedication and a single fire apparatus; and

WHEREAS, in the early twentieth century, when the Blacksburg Fire Department first formed, firefighting apparatuses used motor engines, wooden ladders, and single-jacketed cotton hoses; and

WHEREAS, members wore natural fiber based long coats, rubber boots, and plastic helmets, which provided minimal protection for firefighters; and

WHEREAS, the level of dedication, call to service, and selflessness required to operate in those initial days have become inspirational to firefighters today; and

WHEREAS, from bucket brigades and horse-drawn apparatuses used by the first crews, firefighting has continued to evolve over the years; and

WHEREAS, when the department was founded in 1922, Blacksburg had a population of less than 1,400 people and now, a century later, the town's population is estimated at nearly 45,000 residents with an additional 10,000 citizens living on the Virginia Tech campus; and

WHEREAS, the Blacksburg Fire Department currently has 80 members covering three strategically located stations that house 15 primary apparatuses and multiple support vehicles; and

WHEREAS, the Blacksburg Fire Department responds annually to over 1,200 incidents that include fires, alarms, motor vehicle accidents, gas leaks, carbon monoxide alerts, technical rescues, hazardous materials incidents, service calls, and anything else that Blacksburg, Montgomery County, or Virginia Tech requests and/or requires; and

WHEREAS, in contrast to when the Blacksburg Fire Department was founded, members now wear head-to-toe protective turnout gear that includes hoods, jackets, and pants made of fire-resistant, super-insulative synthetic fibers; and

WHEREAS, in 2023, the Blacksburg Fire Department uses aluminum ladders, double-jacketed hoses, and sophisticated apparatuses that carry necessary tools and equipment; and

WHEREAS, each active member today also carries an assigned radio and a breathing air mask for use with advanced breathing devices; and

WHEREAS, the Blacksburg Fire Department has dedicated hundreds of hours annually to training programs and is capable of addressing additional types of emergencies; and

WHEREAS, the Blacksburg Fire Department has shown commitment to the community in which it has served since its inception; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That the General Assembly hereby join the Blacksburg community in celebration of 100 years of fire prevention and response by the Blacksburg Fire Department; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Blacksburg Fire Department as an expression of the General Assembly's gratitude for its commitment to the fire prevention and response to the Blacksburg community and the citizens of the Commonwealth.

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