

## 2023 SESSION

ENROLLED

### HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 488

*Commending the Blacksburg Volunteer Fire Department.*

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 dedication and a single fire apparatus; and

WHEREAS, in the early 20th century, when the Blacksburg Volunteer 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 Blacksburg Volunteer Fire Department was founded in 1922, Blacksburg had a population of fewer 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 people living on the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) campus; and

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

WHEREAS, the Blacksburg Volunteer Fire Department responds annually to more than 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 or requires; and

WHEREAS, in contrast to when the Blacksburg Volunteer 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 Volunteer Fire Department uses aluminum ladders, double-jacketed hoses, and sophisticated apparatuses that carry necessary tools and equipment; each active member today also carries an assigned radio and a breathing air mask for use with advanced breathing devices; and

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

WHEREAS, the Blacksburg Volunteer 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 Blacksburg Volunteer Fire Department hereby be commended 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 the Blacksburg Volunteer Fire Department as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for the department's commitment to fire prevention and response and for a legacy of service to the Blacksburg community and the Commonwealth.

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