

1 State of Arkansas
2 92nd General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2019

HR 1049

4
5 By: Representative M. Hodges

6
7 **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

8 TO REMEMBER THE 1959 FIRE AT THE ARKANSAS NEGRO BOYS
9 INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL.

10
11
12 **Subtitle**

13 TO REMEMBER THE 1959 FIRE AT THE ARKANSAS
14 NEGRO BOYS INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL.

15
16
17 WHEREAS, on March 5, 1959, there was a fire in a dormitory at the
18 Arkansas Negro Boys Industrial School in Wrightsville, Arkansas; and

19
20 WHEREAS, the dormitory housed 68 boys and 21 of the boys perished in
21 the fire due to locked doors and the severity of the fire; and

22
23 WHEREAS, because of both the lack of a fire department in Wrightsville
24 and the need for the Little Rock Fire Department to lay 600' of hose to reach
25 the nearest fire hydrant upon arrival, the entire dormitory was lost in the
26 fire; and

27
28 WHEREAS, 14 of the 21 deceased boys were buried at the Haven of Rest
29 Cemetery in a mass grave without a marking or headstone; and

30
31 WHEREAS, helping the effort to remember those who lost their lives to
32 the fire is the 2017 book by Grif Stockley, "Black Boys Burning: The 1959
33 Fire at the Arkansas Negro Boys Industrial School"; and

34
35 WHEREAS, former Senator Irma Hunter Brown, who leads the Friends of the
36 Haven of Rest and is a part of a group that raised funds for the monument,



1 told the gathered group at the graveside, "We don't want this to be a
2 forgotten part of the history of Little Rock, of the state of Arkansas, of
3 this country – because the entire world looked at what happened here. This
4 part of our history, as painful as it is, [it] will always be remembered",
5

6 NOW THEREFORE,

7 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NINETY-SECOND GENERAL
8 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

9
10 THAT the House of Representatives remember the 1959 fire at the
11 Arkansas Negro Boys Industrial School and commend the efforts of those who
12 made sure the boys who died will always be remembered.
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36