

By: Representative M. Hodges

## HOUSE RESOLUTION

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

### Subtitle

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

NOW THEREFORE,

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

THAT the House of Representatives remember the 1959 fire at the Arkansas Negro Boys Industrial School and commend the efforts of those who made sure the boys who died will always be remembered.