

**No. R-202. House concurrent resolution congratulating the Bennington Rural Fire Department on its 60th anniversary.**

(H.C.R.151)

Offered by: Representatives Morrissey of Bennington, Corcoran of Bennington, Campion of Bennington, and Mook of Bennington

Offered by: Senators Hartwell and Sears

Whereas, in 1953, the Bennington Pomona Grange, recognizing the need for more localized fire protection services in rural Bennington, established the Bennington Rural Fire Department, and

Whereas, the Department's first chief was T. Howard Mattison, who commanded a force of 35 firefighters, and

Whereas, by 1956, recognizing that a more substantial financing and support structure was required, the Department was instrumental in organizing the Bennington Fire District No. 1, which geographically encompassed all of rural Bennington and those sections of the town of Bennington not within the boundaries of the village of Bennington, including Old Bennington and North Bennington, and, subsequently, a contractual arrangement was established with the town of Woodford, and

Whereas, the Department consists of four companies, each of which has its own officers, and in addition, the legal voters of the entire district annually elect a chief, first assistant chief, and second assistant chief, and

Whereas, in 1959, the Department's firefighters built their own firehouse on Willow Road, which was expanded in 1976 and again in 1992, and two additional firehouses were constructed subsequently, one on Beech Street in 1966 and the other at Fairdale Farms in 1969, the latter having since been replaced in 1985, when the Department purchased nearby land, and

Whereas, today, the 55-member Department is the proud owner of four fully equipped pumper trucks, a brush truck, and rescue vehicles, including extraction equipment, and

Whereas, in 1985, Chief Edward A. Haddad, Jr. and, in 2000, First Assistant Chief Kevin J. Goodhue served as president of the Vermont State Firefighters' Association, and, also in the year 2000, the association named Chief Walt Sweet Chief of the Year, a very special honor, and

Whereas, in 2013, under the outstanding leadership of Chief Shawn K. Gardner, First Assistant Chief John M. Scutt, and Second Assistant Chief Aaron Longtin, the Bennington Rural Fire Department is proudly observing its 60th anniversary as a vital volunteer public safety service, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly congratulates the Bennington Rural Fire Department on the occasion of the Department's 60th anniversary, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Shawn Gardner, Chief of the Bennington Rural Fire Department.