

No. R-336. House concurrent resolution congratulating the Vergennes Fire Department on its 150th anniversary.

(H.C.R.278)

Offered by Representatives Birong of Vergennes and North of Ferrisburgh

Offered by Senators Hardy and Heffernan

Whereas, the history of firefighting in Vergennes originated with a set of private sub municipal hook-and-ladder and hose companies dating from at least 1847, when the General Assembly approved the charter of the Vergennes Hook and Ladder Company, and

Whereas, at the start of 1876, the Vergennes Hook and Ladder Company, along with four other companies, the Volunteer Hose Company No. 2, the Stevens Hose Company No.1, the Otter Creek Hook and Ladder Company No. 1, and the Independent Hose Company, maintained five operating locations at city hall, the Stevens House, two at the Shade Roller Factory, and one at Cota's Factory, and

Whereas, on January 3, 1876, the Court of Common Council for the city of Vergennes (the Council) began a new era in local firefighting, enacting an ordinance establishing a citywide Vergennes Fire Department (VFD), and

Whereas, this transformation of firefighting in Vergennes constituted a major institutional and cultural change, and marked the city's progress and modernization, and

Whereas, on April 9, 1878, the Council reaffirmed its commitment to the VFD, adopting "An Ordinance for the Prevention and Extinguishment of Fires," which set a \$6.00 annual salary for each firefighter, and

Whereas, over the last century and a half, the VFD has continuously updated its equipment, support systems, and headquarters, and it extinguished historic blazes in 1890, 1929, 1958, and 1969, and

Whereas, although the private company's firefighting role has long ceased, in 2002, the Stevens Hose Company was reestablished as a nonprofit organization with a mission of "banding together for the purpose of supporting the fires service as voted on by ... [the members of the VFD]," and it has financed additional equipment, for which the City of Vergennes has not budgeted, and, currently, it is in the process of fundraising to restore the historic 1925 Boyer pumper, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly congratulates the Vergennes Fire Department on its 150th anniversary, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Vergennes Fire Department Chief David DiBiase.