

State of Vermont

House of Representatives



Montpelier, Vermont

Concurrent House Resolution

H.C.R. 103

Offered by Representatives Burke of Brattleboro, Goodnow of Brattleboro, and Kornheiser of Brattleboro

Offered by Senators Harrison and Hashim

House concurrent resolution commemorating the establishment of the Austine School for the Deaf collection and exhibit at the Vermont Historical Society Library in Barre

Whereas, in the 19th century, Brevet Colonel William Austine of Brattleboro donated \$50,000.00 for the construction of a hospital in the community, and

Whereas, because a hospital already existed in Brattleboro, after the Colonel's death, his estate executor arranged for the legal redesignation of the gift for the purpose of establishing a school for the blind and deaf, and

Whereas, the General Assembly, in 1904 Acts and Resolves No. 276, incorporated "The Austine Sanitarium," and it amended the legislation in 1908 Acts and Resolves No. 319 to give the new organization flexibility in designating a name, and

Whereas, finally, in 1910 Acts and Resolves No. 74, the General Assembly appropriated \$50,000.00 "for the purpose of erecting a suitable building or plant for the use of said corporation, upon the land owned by it in Brattleboro, Vermont" subject to it being used for a school for the deaf, and

Whereas, the Austine School for the Deaf opened in the fall of 1912 with 16 students and at the first commencement in 1914, both Alexander Graham Bell and Helen Keller were speakers, and

Whereas, operation of the Austine School for the Deaf continued until 2014, and the school's historic documentation and artifacts are located at the Winston Prouty Center in Brattleboro under the curatorial supervision of the Austine School for the Deaf Museum Board, Donna Marie Auditore-Pyne, President, and

Whereas, in order to afford greater prominence to the history and role of the Austine School for the Deaf, a select collection of the oldest artifacts has been transferred for exhibition to the Vermont Historical Society Library in Barre, and a dedication ceremony, at which State officials spoke, occurred on October 26, 2024, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly commemorates the establishment of the Austine School for the Deaf collection and exhibit at the Vermont Historical Society Library in Barre, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the immediate past chair of the Austine School for the Deaf Museum Board and the Vermont Historical Society.