**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR THE FAITHFUL COMMITMENT OF THE FIREFIGHTERS OF THE BUFFALO‑MT. PISGAH FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT AND TO CELEBRATE WITH THEM A HALF CENTURY OF THE DEPARTMENT’S DEDICATED SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITIES OF BUFFALO AND MT. PISGAH.

Whereas, before Buffalo‑Mt. Pisgah Fire Protection District was formed, neither Buffalo nor Mt. Pisgah enjoyed the safety of having a fire department to respond to needs in the community; and

Whereas, on February 5, 1967, Buffalo‑Mt. Pisgah Fire Protection District formed as an independent South Carolina Special Purpose District to service two rural communities. It was housed at the intersection of present‑day Jones and Mt. Pisgah Roads in the store of Emmett Sowell, one of the district’s first commissioners, along with Edward Baker and T. C. Ogburn. Charlie Wiggins served as the first chief; and

Whereas, the first fire truck was an old fuel tanker converted for the department’s use. In 1969, the district purchased a Chevrolet C/50 pumper, and by the early 1970s, Kershaw County had constructed a two‑bay station at the present site on Mt. Pisgah Road; and

Whereas, without a modern paging and radio system, the station depended on residents to report a fire by calling J. W. Sowell’s Store, which was about one hundred yards from the new station, and Mr. Sowell would relay the information to the station while his wife called other members of the department on the phone; and

Whereas, a siren was installed later to alert members to calls, and in the 1970s, the department began communicating on CB radios. In the 1980s, the department adopted the use of VHF radios and pagers with a dedicated dispatch location at the Kershaw Police Department in Lancaster County. The 1990s would see the department begin using the Kershaw County Dispatch E-911 system; and

Whereas, the commissioners and members of the department decided to join the county fire service in order to provide better service to its residents. By 2007, the Kershaw County Fire Marshal relinquished the Gates Ford Fire Department, experiencing a lack of volunteers, to the Buffalo‑Mt. Pisgah Fire Protection District; and

Whereas, a year and a half later, the department received a new fire truck from the county, probably the first new engine the department had received since 1969; and

Whereas, 2010 and 2016 each brought a reduction in the department’s ISO rating, which helps to reduce insurance premiums for structures in the community of both stations; and

Whereas, in order for the department to respond to medical needs in the community, a medical first‑responder program was added in 2011, but in 2012 the ambulance that had been converted for use as a service/rescue truck had to be retired; and

Whereas, the community helped to raise funds to purchase a 2012 Ford F350 chassis, and the department purchased a Knapheide custom rescue body to fit the chassis. The new service/rescue truck was operational within six months of the loss of the other truck; and

Whereas, in 2014, Kershaw County Fire Service purchased a new tanker for the department with a 2,100‑gallon water tank able to dispense 500 gallons a minute and equipped with an electric dump and a swivel‑dump chute for dumping water from three sides; and

Whereas, the South Carolina General Assembly is deeply indebted to the first responders throughout our State and values the heroic dedication of the members of the Buffalo‑Mt. Pisgah Fire Protection District as they reach the benchmark of five decades of outstanding service to the citizens of their community. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

That the members of the South Carolina General Assembly, by this resolution, recognize and honor the faithful commitment of the firefighters of the Buffalo‑Mt. Pisgah Fire Protection District and celebrate with them a half century of the department’s dedicated service to the communities of Buffalo and Mt. Pisgah.

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