**South Carolina General Assembly**

125th Session, 2023-2024

**S. 704**

**STATUS INFORMATION**

Concurrent Resolution

Sponsors: Senators McElveen, Gustafson, Adams, Alexander, Allen, Bennett, Matthews, Campsen, Cash, Climer, Corbin, Cromer, Davis, Fanning, Gambrell, Garrett, Goldfinch, Grooms, Harpootlian, Hembree, Hutto, Jackson, K. Johnson, M. Johnson, Kimbrell, Kimpson, Loftis, Malloy, Martin, Massey, McLeod, Peeler, Rankin, Reichenbach, Rice, Sabb, Scott, Senn, Setzler, Shealy, Stephens, Talley, Turner, Verdin, Williams and Young

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Introduced in the Senate on April 4, 2023

Introduced in the House on April 18, 2023

Adopted by the General Assembly on April 18, 2023

Summary: Cleveland School Fire Anniversary Day Naming

**HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

Date Body Action Description with journal page number

4/4/2023 Senate Introduced ([Senate Journal‑page 2](h:\sj\20230404.docx))

4/4/2023 Senate Referred to Committee on **Family and Veterans' Services** ([Senate Journal‑page 2](h:\sj\20230404.docx))

4/5/2023 Scrivener's error corrected

4/11/2023 Senate Recalled from Committee on **Family and Veterans' Services** ([Senate Journal‑page 3](h:\sj\20230411.docx))

4/12/2023 Scrivener's error corrected

4/12/2023 Senate Adopted, sent to House ([Senate Journal‑page 20](h:\sj\20230412.docx))

4/18/2023 House Introduced, adopted, returned with concurrence

View the latest  [legislative information](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/billsearch.php?billnumbers=704&session=125&summary=B)  at the website

**VERSIONS OF THIS BILL**

[04/04/2023](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess125_2023-2024/prever/704_20230404.docx)

[04/05/2023](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess125_2023-2024/prever/704_20230405.docx)

[04/11/2023](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess125_2023-2024/prever/704_20230411.docx)

[04/12/2023](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess125_2023-2024/prever/704_20230412.docx)

Recalled

April 11, 2023

S. 704

Introduced by Senator McElveen

S. Printed 04/11/23--S. [SEC 4/12/2023 12:22 PM]

Read the first time April 04, 2023

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A concurrent RESOLUTION

TO COMMEMORATE THE ONE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CLEVELAND SCHOOL FIRE AND TO RECOGNIZE MAY 17, 2023, AS “CLEVELAND SCHOOL FIRE MEMORIAL DAY” IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

Whereas, on May 17, 1923, seventy‑seven children and adults died in a tragic fire which consumed the Cleveland School near the city of Camden. May 17, 2023, marks the one hundredth anniversary of this tragedy; and

Whereas, the fire began during a school play, beginning with a lamp falling and spilling its flammable contents. The fire quickly spread to the curtain and stage, and because the building was overcrowded and did not have clear fire exits, students, parents, and other attendees were trapped and suffered horrific injuries or death; and

Whereas, the Camden Fire Department did not receive word of the fire until it was too late for them to save the many who perished; and

Whereas, in response to this devastating tragedy, public outcry brought attention to the pressing issue of fire safety in places of assembly. A call for change spread across the State, especially within the fire service and the state’s General Assembly. Charleston’s Fire Chief and President of the newly established State Firemen’s Association, Chief Louis Behrens, personally traveled throughout the State visiting fire departments to seek their support for new laws to increase fire safety. Chief Behrens inspired the fire service to contact their legislators to introduce laws that would address the weak building and fire codes in existence at that time; and

Whereas, elected officials began to enact legislation to improve building and fire codes across the State. National fire service organizations, including NFPA, took up the call for strengthening building and fire codes. New fire safety codes required adequate exits and exterior fire escapes, alarm systems, fire retardant materials and contents, capacity guidelines, improved lighting and heating installations, portable fire extinguishers, mandated exit drills, and training for staff personnel; and

Whereas, a monument was erected at the site of the fire and at the Beulah Cemetery, listing the names of the children and adults who perished in the fire; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina Senate are deeply grieved remembering the tragedy of the Cleveland School Fire. Now, therefore,

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

That the members of the South Carolina General Assembly, by this resolution, recognize May 17, 2023, as “Cleveland School Fire Memorial Day” in South Carolina.

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