

Chapter No. 2077
12/SS01/R37
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***SENATE
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
No. 511***

Originated in Senate Liz Welch Secretary

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 511

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FORREST COUNTY AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL AND COMMENDING THE RICH HISTORY OF THIS UNIQUE MISSISSIPPI INSTITUTION.

WHEREAS, Forrest County Agricultural High School in Brooklyn, Mississippi, was established in 1911 by the State Legislature to eliminate an educational gap not filled by the average rural school, and this year is celebrating its 100th Anniversary; and

WHEREAS, the original purpose of the Forrest County Agricultural High School was "to offer boys and girls such training as will prepare them to be happy and useful citizens, community builders and homemakers." In offering courses in vocational and technical work, it was not the aim of the school merely to give technical training, but to teach the dignity of labor, to train the hand and mind, and to develop men and women fitted for the lives they were to live with the ability to enjoy it to the fullest extent. The bill provided for additional county affiliated, agricultural high schools with boarding facilities; and

WHEREAS, the statute under which the school was organized provided for the government of the school to be vested in five trustees, two to be elected by the Board of Supervisors, two by the County School Board, and the County Superintendent of Education to be the fifth member. The first Board of Trustees included E.J. Currie, President; J.C. McDonald; M.L. McKenzie; W.S. Perkins; and A.D. Draughn. At that time, Mr. E.J. Currie was County Superintendent of Education. After the establishment of

Forrest County Agricultural High School, Mr. Currie continued to serve as County Superintendent and also as Superintendent of Forrest County Agricultural High School; and

WHEREAS, many changes have occurred throughout the one-hundred-year history of Forrest County Agricultural High School. The campus has grown to include many new buildings and most recently the new technology building. All classrooms are now air-conditioned. Students continue to excel in all areas, and advanced placement offerings are a challenge to the most academically talented. In 1998, the school was ranked 7th in the state on ACT scores. The farm continues to operate, although the chief emphasis now is the small herd of registered cattle and timber resources. The school still enjoys an enviable reputation in academics and athletics. In 1988, the school passed all accreditation standards without a single deficiency; and

WHEREAS, the well-kept, beautifully landscaped grounds of the campus include stately buildings, both old and new, while approximately 600 students busily prepare themselves for the future. Unique to this high school campus scene is a boys dormitory, now vacant, and a farm setting of 320 acres of timberland and lush pasture, where herds of cows and sheep lazily graze. This setting is hallowed grounds for thousands of alumni who are bonded very closely to this special school; and

WHEREAS, construction of the three original buildings, the administration building and two dormitories, was contracted for \$19,739.00, and the first school session began with 25 boarders and 60 local students. The 1915 bulletin adds that in addition to the three original buildings, the campus included "a model home science and arts hall, power, light and heat plant, with which is connected the splendidly equipped manual training rooms, a good stock barn, model potato house, home for its farm foremen, and other buildings." Athletics were encouraged and the school set outstanding records in football, basketball, track and boxing.

The 1915 bulletin stated that "athletics, judiciously directed, affords exercise conducive to good health, strengthens character, takes care of discipline by using up surplus energy and diverting the mind from thoughts and acts of mischief, and creates loyalty to the school." Literary societies were organized "to train students to think logically before an audience and to develop facility of expression"; and

WHEREAS, in 1917, war affected the campus. All boys were required to have two uniforms purchased at any store selling army clothing and to sew Forrest County Agricultural High School insignias on them. Every morning before breakfast, the boys drilled one hour under the direction of an Army officer. The first school paper, *First Hash*, in 1924 was intended "to rejuvenate the pep around Currie Hill after the war." In 1929, the Board of Trustees received proposals to "enlarge the present administration building to care for the increased enrollment as well as to provide a building modern and complete in every respect for the students of the county"; and

WHEREAS, since the early days of its history, the school has done its share in promoting friendly international relations and has been well represented with a large percentage of dormitory students from south of the border. The story of the school and its advantages spread throughout the Latin American countries, and yearly applications from those countries have numbered in the hundreds. Students from Taiwan, Indonesia, Iran, and other foreign countries also learned of the school and came to spend their high school years on the campus; and

WHEREAS, although Homecomings had been held almost from the beginning of the school, in May 1934, the Forrest County Agricultural High School Alumni Association was organized. In 1941, when many boys left Forrest County Agricultural High School to fight in World War II, the annual Homecoming was suspended for the duration of the war. Since that time, the annual event has

become a tradition for thousands of former students who return from far and near on the first Friday in April; and

WHEREAS, due to the fact that Forrest County Agricultural High School is a most unique school, it was designated as a State Historical Site in 1996. A Mississippi historical landmark sign was placed in front of the main building in 2008. In 2011, Forrest County Agricultural High School celebrated its 100th birthday. Using words from the school's Alma Mater, "For over 100 years, Forrest County Agricultural High School has kindled countless flames of courage. May they never die":

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby recognize the Centennial Celebration of the establishment of Forrest County Agricultural High School, commend the rich history of this unique Mississippi landmark, and join school alumni on this auspicious occasion.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to the Superintendent and Board of Trustees of Forrest County Agricultural High School, forwarded to the State Board of Education, and made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
January 18, 2012



PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
January 25, 2012



SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES