

1 SJR93  
2 192710-3  
3 By Senators Figures, Williams, Albritton, Allen, Beasley,  
4 Blackwell, Brewbaker, Bussman, Chambliss, Coleman-Madison,  
5 Dial, Dunn, Glover, Hightower, Holley, Holtzclaw, Livingston,  
6 Marsh, McClendon, Melson, Orr, Pittman, Reed, Sanders,  
7 Sanford, Scofield, Shelnutt, Singleton, Smith, Smitherman,  
8 Stutts, Waggoner, Ward and Whatley  
9 RFD:  
10 First Read: 08-MAR-18

8 SUPPORTING THE FINDING OF THE CLOTILDA SHIP AND  
9 PRESERVING AFRICATOWN.  
10

11 WHEREAS, shipwreck remains discovered in Baldwin  
12 County in January 2018 were initially believed to be the  
13 Clotilda, the last known ship to bring enslaved Africans to  
14 the United States; on Sunday, July 8, 1860, the Clotilda  
15 sailed into Mobile Bay with 110 African men, women, and  
16 children on board; this landing occurred 52 years after the  
17 United States abolished the international slave trade; and

18 WHEREAS, the Alabama Historical Commission (AHC) is  
19 working with the National Park Service (NPS), SEARCH, Inc.,  
20 and the Smithsonian National Museum of African American  
21 History and Culture (NMAAHC) concerning the archaeological  
22 investigation; in collaboration with the Slave Wrecks Project  
23 (SWP), these entities determined that the discovered vessel  
24 is, in fact, not the Clotilda; this discovery and examination  
25 have powerfully reconnected the story of Clotilda to a  
26 national and international audience; this attention will be  
27 the start of a renewed effort to find the Clotilda; and

1           WHEREAS, the young Africans of the Clotilda  
2       established the Africatown settlement in 1866 as the first  
3       town founded, continuously occupied, and controlled by blacks  
4       in the United States; by the 1890s, Africatown consisted of  
5       about 30 homes; and

6           WHEREAS, the residents of Africatown owned land,  
7       became United States citizens in 1868, continued to practice  
8       their traditional religions, and built churches and graveyards  
9       as the settlement expanded; the citizens of the tight-knit  
10      community continued to dream of returning to Africa; and

11          WHEREAS, by the 1880s Africatown was home to a  
12      second generation that had never been to Africa but knew the  
13      stories of their ancestors about the land of abundance and  
14      beauty; even after the last survivors of the Clotilda died,  
15      the descendants, numbering in the thousands, continued to  
16      carry the legacy of pride, distinctiveness, and attachment to  
17      Africa; and

18          WHEREAS, the men and women of the Clotilda who lived  
19      and died in Africatown on their own terms, have a distinctive  
20      place in United States history; those still living in  
21      Africatown share with their descendants a sense of belonging  
22      to a small town with no equivalent in this country; and

23          WHEREAS, the discovery of the wreckage and the  
24      ongoing search for the Clotilda bring the significance of this  
25      historical chapter in Alabama history to the forefront; it is  
26      highly appropriate to commend, support, and encourage the  
27      important efforts of AHC, NPS, NMAAHC, SWP, and SEARCH, Inc.,

1 in this archaeological investigation and collaboration to  
2 preserve and promote this extraordinary historic treasure; now  
3 therefore,

4 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH  
5 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That we commend and support the  
6 research efforts coordinated by the Alabama Historical  
7 Commission, in collaboration with the National Park Service,  
8 SEARCH, Inc., the Smithsonian National Museum of African  
9 American History and Culture, and the Slave Wrecks Project,  
10 relating to the Clotilda and the preservation of the heritage  
11 of Africatown.

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That by copy of this  
13 resolution, those involved in this historically and  
14 economically significant undertaking are highly commended for  
15 their dedicated efforts and encouraged to continue.