

1 HR417
2 119020-1
3 By Representative McClammy
4 RFD:
5 First Read: 25-FEB-10

8 RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ALABAMA
9 STATE UNIVERSITY SIT-IN CAMPAIGN.

10
11 WHEREAS, four students from North Carolina A&T State
12 University launched the modern sit-in movement on February 1,
13 1960, at the counter of a segregated Woolworth's restaurant in
14 Greensboro, North Carolina; and

15 WHEREAS, three weeks later, on February 25, students
16 of Alabama State College, now Alabama State University, became
17 the first college students in the Deep South to stage a sit-in
18 when they attempted to secure service at the Montgomery County
19 Courthouse Cafe; and

20 WHEREAS, Governor John Patterson, ex officio
21 chairman of the State Board of Education, demanded that
22 President Harper Councill Trenholm expel the nine persons
23 cited as the principal organizers of the sit-ins: Elroy Emory,
24 John Dixon, Edward E. Jones, Bernard Lee, James McFadden,
25 Joseph Peterson, Leon Rice, Howard Shipman, and Marzette
26 Watts; and

1 WHEREAS, hundreds of students, consisting of half
2 the student body of ASC, protested the expulsions and over the
3 next several weeks participated in a series of demonstrations,
4 including marches to the State Capitol, boycotting classes,
5 and refusal to register for the spring 1960 term, along with
6 issuing protest statements to the Governor and the media; and

7 WHEREAS, civil rights leaders including Reverend
8 Ralph David Abernathy, who was a 1950 ASC graduate as well as
9 president of the Montgomery Improvement Association and
10 treasurer of the Southern Leadership Conference, and SCLC
11 president Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., joined with local Black
12 churches in support of the student protests, holding mass
13 meetings and carrying out sympathy demonstrations; and

14 WHEREAS, the ASC students' civil rights activism
15 resulted in assaults on Blacks in downtown Montgomery and on
16 the ASC campus, and ASC President Trenholm was forced into the
17 precarious situation of maintaining state funding for the
18 college and, at the same time, protecting student
19 demonstrators; and

20 WHEREAS, ASC President Trenholm was in effect
21 removed from his position after 37 years of service because he
22 would not make students "behave" as demanded by state
23 officials; and

24 WHEREAS, faculty members who supported student
25 protestors were fired or pressured into resigning during the
26 spring term of 1960, including Dr. Lawrence Reddick and Jo Ann
27 Robinson; and

1 WHEREAS, two landmark legal cases emerged from the
2 ASC sit-in campaign, most notably the St. John Dixon v.
3 Alabama case, which affirmed the rights of due process for
4 college students when disciplined by institutions of higher
5 learning; and

6 WHEREAS, Alabama State University is observing the
7 50th Anniversary of the 1960 sit-in campaign; now therefore,

8 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF
9 THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, That the 50th Anniversary of the
10 1960 sit-in campaign by students at what was then Alabama
11 State College is hereby recognized, and by copy of the
12 resolution for appropriate presentation and display,
13 commendations are conveyed to those groundbreaking students
14 and to the leadership at Alabama State University for
15 memorializing the historic events.