

1       HR382  
2       185987-1  
3       By Representatives Knight, McClammy, Holmes (A), Hollis,  
4       Lawrence, England, Drummond, Clarke, Howard, Bracy, Daniels,  
5       Moore (M), Rogers, Coleman, Givan and Hall  
6       RFD: Rules  
7       First Read: 27-APR-17

2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8 RECOGNIZING THE SESQUICENTENNIAL OF VOTING AND  
9 OFFICE HOLDING BY AFRICAN AMERICANS IN ALABAMA.  
10

11 WHEREAS, in March 1867, the United States Congress  
12 passed the First Reconstruction Act, which called for southern  
13 states to draft new constitutions including equal suffrage  
14 rights for freedmen; and

15 WHEREAS, black suffrage became a reality in Alabama  
16 when the first African Americans to cast ballots in the state  
17 did so on April 1, 1867, in a Tuscumbia mayoral election; and

18 WHEREAS, General John Pope, military governor of the  
19 Third Military District, which included the State of Alabama,  
20 issued orders dividing the state into forty-four voting  
21 districts; and

22 WHEREAS, two white males and one African American  
23 male were appointed as registrars to oversee voter  
24 registration in each district; and

25 WHEREAS, these black registrars were the first  
26 African American officeholders in the State of Alabama; and

1           WHEREAS, between July 1 and August 20, 1867, 88,243  
2 African American men registered to vote throughout Alabama;  
3 and

4           WHEREAS, the 1867 voter registration books, held at  
5 the Alabama Department of Archives and History, are the first  
6 public records that document the first and last names of  
7 African American males living in Alabama; and

8           WHEREAS, held October 1-3, 1867, the successful  
9 referendum on calling a constitutional convention marked the  
10 first time that African American men throughout Alabama cast  
11 ballots; and

12           WHEREAS, eighteen of the one hundred delegates  
13 elected to the constitutional convention were African  
14 American, making that convention the first meeting of black  
15 and white lawmakers in the state's history; and

16           WHEREAS, the delegates to that convention framed a  
17 constitution which established equal apportionment, created  
18 the constitutional office of lieutenant governor, guaranteed  
19 property rights for married women, curtailed imprisonment for  
20 debt, and laid aside one-fifth of the state's annual revenue  
21 for the support of free, public, universal education; and

22           WHEREAS, since 1867, generations of African American  
23 Alabamians have distinguished themselves in multifaceted  
24 campaigns large and small to protect the right to vote for all  
25 citizens, suffrage being a cherished and long-sought  
26 constitutional right; now therefore,

1                   BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF  
2     THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, That we do hereby commemorate the  
3     sesquicentennial anniversary of the first votes cast and first  
4     public offices held by African Americans in the State of  
5     Alabama.