

SJR57 INTRODUCED



1 SJR57
2 QNC9Y41-1
3 By Senators Beasley, Albritton, Allen, Barfoot, Bell, Butler,
4 Carnley, Chambliss, Chesteen, Coleman, Coleman-Madison,
5 Elliott, Figures, Givhan, Gudger, Hatcher, Hovey, Jones,
6 Kelley, Kitchens, Livingston, Melson, Orr, Price, Roberts,
7 Sessions, Shelnutt, Singleton, Smitherman, Stewart, Stutts,
8 Waggoner, Weaver, Williams
9 RFD:
10 First Read: 03-Apr-25



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4 SJR____ COMMEMORATING THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONWIDE
5 POLIO ERADICATION CAMPAIGN.

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7 WHEREAS, seventy years ago, in 1955, the United
8 States embarked on a historic public health initiative, the
9 nationwide polio eradication campaign, marking the beginning
10 of the end for a disease that had long afflicted children
11 and adults, leaving thousands paralyzed or dead each year;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, polio is a highly infectious disease that
14 has existed for thousands of years, and which primarily
15 affects children under the age of five causing paralysis and
16 death; and for which there is no known cure; and

17 WHEREAS, through the groundbreaking work of many
18 physicians and scientists, the development of the first safe
19 and effective polio vaccine offered hope to millions of
20 families across Alabama, the United States, and the world;
21 and

22 WHEREAS, in the early years in the fight against
23 polio, Black doctors and researchers at the Tuskegee
24 Infantile Paralysis Center at Tuskegee Institute, now
25 Tuskegee University, conducted significant work in treating
26 and eradicating polio, with the center serving as the only
27 place in the South where African American children with
28 polio could come for treatment; and

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29 WHEREAS, in 1955, Ira Myers, M.D. became
30 administrative officer and assistant to then State Health
31 Officer Dr. D.G. Gill; he helped initiate the mass Salk
32 Polio Vaccine Program in Alabama, after having served from
33 1950 to 1955 in the federal Public Health Service as Senior
34 Surgeon, Chief Epidemic Intelligence Officer, Communicable
35 Disease Center; he participated in field studies of polio
36 epidemiology and trials of the Salk polio vaccine and
37 coauthored several scientific articles in national
38 publications detailing the cause, effects, and treatment for
39 polio and other similar viral infections; and

40 WHEREAS, on April 12, 1955, the largest vaccination
41 effort in U.S. history began, which ultimately led to the
42 eradication of polio in the United States; President Dwight
43 Eisenhower, whose administration played a key role in
44 funding polio research and ensuring widespread distribution
45 of the vaccine, stated, "I think that this is one of the
46 greatest events of our time"; and

47 WHEREAS, this anniversary serves as a reminder of the
48 power of science, medicine, and collective action in
49 overcoming such a terrible and devastating disease affecting
50 children and stands as one of the greatest public health
51 triumphs of the 20th century; now therefore,

52 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH
53 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That we do hereby commemorate the
54 70th Anniversary of the nationwide polio eradication
55 campaign and acknowledge and salute the tremendous
56 accomplishments of all the scientists, physicians, public



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57 health personnel, parents, and others, many Alabamians among
58 them, who made this remarkable achievement possible.