

By: Representatives McLean, Karriem, Wright To: Rules

## HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 37

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING THE  
2 DILIGENCE OF THE FACULTY, STAFF AND STUDENTS OF FRANKLIN ACADEMY  
3 ON THE OCCASION OF THE SCHOOL'S HISTORIC 200TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY.

4 WHEREAS, Franklin Academy, a historic public school  
5 institution established in Columbus, Mississippi, is the oldest  
6 public school in Mississippi and will celebrate the splendid  
7 occasion of its 200th anniversary; and

8 WHEREAS, 200 years ago, on February 10, 1821, Franklin  
9 Academy was chartered by the Mississippi Legislature, and on  
10 December 1, 1821, the first structure to house Franklin Academy, a  
11 20 foot by 30 foot frame structure, was completed, unplastered and  
12 unceiled, with glass windows in the front of the building and long  
13 shuttered windows in the rear; and

14 WHEREAS, 14 years later and 30 years before the Civil War  
15 would end, two brick buildings were erected at Franklin Academy,  
16 one for the boys and one for the girls, and a large wall was built  
17 between the playgrounds and buildings to ensure that the two  
18 genders remained separate; and



19 WHEREAS, after the Freedmen's School in Columbus burned down  
20 in 1867, a new school for African-American children was built in  
21 1869, which was run by both the United States Freedmen's Bureau  
22 and the American Missionary Association, and became known as Union  
23 Academy in 1874, and in 1877, Union Academy became a branch of  
24 Franklin Academy and William Isaac Mitchell served as its first  
25 principal; and

26 WHEREAS, Franklin Academy completed a three-story brick  
27 structure in 1886, that contained 14 rooms along with a chapel,  
28 and on March 25, 1903, a new Union Academy building opened that  
29 contained an additional 12 rooms; and

30 WHEREAS, on November 2, 1909, the President of the United  
31 States of America, President William Howard Taft, visited Franklin  
32 Academy and toured the entire City of Columbus as part of a  
33 national tour; and

34 WHEREAS, when Stephen D. Lee High School was opened in 1918,  
35 Franklin Academy became an elementary school, and in 1939, the  
36 current two-story brick school building with its columned entrance  
37 was built under the Public Works Administration; and

38 WHEREAS, in September 1965, 11 years after the United States  
39 Supreme Court had ruled that racial segregation was  
40 unconstitutional in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*,  
41 Franklin Academy was integrated, and the first African-American  
42 students were Calvin Doughty, Dwight Doughty, Perry Jamison,  
43 Curtis Jamison, Larry Jamison and Tommy Jamison, Jr.; and



44 WHEREAS, Franklin Academy, a truly historic institution in  
45 Mississippi, was placed on the National Register of Historic  
46 Places in 1980, and on November 14, 1990, Franklin Academy was  
47 designated a Mississippi Landmark; and

48 WHEREAS, while Union Academy officially closed in 2008, its  
49 doors were blown open again on February 23, 2019, when a tornado  
50 hit Columbus and damaged Success Academy, forcing those students  
51 to use the Union Academy building until repairs could be  
52 completed; and

53 WHEREAS, throughout the school's history, the students have  
54 been under the tutelage of some of the best instructors to ever  
55 teach in the State of Mississippi, and while the community, the  
56 leadership and even the landscape have transformed in the past 200  
57 years, Franklin Academy's devotion to help each child reach his or  
58 her fullest potential and achieve greatness has remained  
59 steadfast; and

60 WHEREAS, after 200 years of dedication to the students of  
61 Columbus, Mississippi, Franklin Academy continues to grow and  
62 remains an educational stronghold and a source of intellectual  
63 empowerment for its members, the citizens of Columbus,  
64 Mississippi, and the surrounding communities; and

65 WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to recognize  
66 and commend outstanding and contributory educational institutions  
67 such as Franklin Academy, which continues to be a cornerstone of  
68 Lowndes County and the Columbus community as it strives



69 continuously to mold the minds of the younger generation in a  
70 positive and contributory manner:

71 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF  
72 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING  
73 THEREIN, That we do hereby commend and congratulate the diligence  
74 of the faculty, staff and students of Franklin Academy on the  
75 occasion of the school's historic 200th year anniversary and  
76 extend warmest wishes for continued prosperity, growth and  
77 success.

78 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be  
79 furnished to the Superintendent of the Columbus Municipal School  
80 District, the Principal of Franklin Academy and to the members of  
81 the Capitol Press Corps.

