

1 State of Arkansas
2 91st General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2017

SCR 7

4
5 By: Senator B. King
6 By: Representative G. McGill

7
8 **SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

9 RECOGNIZING BASS REEVES AND HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO LAW
10 ENFORCEMENT.

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13 **Subtitle**

14 RECOGNIZING BASS REEVES AND HIS
15 CONTRIBUTIONS TO LAW ENFORCEMENT.

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18 WHEREAS, Mr. Bass Reeves was born a slave in Crawford County, Arkansas,
19 in 1838, but went on to become one of the first black lawmen west of the
20 Mississippi River; and

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22 WHEREAS, Mr. Reeves escaped his master, William Reeves, and took refuge
23 in Indian Territory, now modern-day Oklahoma, where he developed his firearm
24 and tracking skills amongst the Creek and Seminole Indians; he is believed to
25 have fought with the Union Indians who fought in Indian Territory during the
26 Civil War; and after the Emancipation Proclamation, he was no longer a
27 fugitive and was able to purchase property in Van Buren County, became a
28 farmer, and fathered 10 children with his wife, Nellie Jennie Reeves; and

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30 WHEREAS, Federal Judge Isaac Parker made Mr. Reeves a Deputy United
31 States Marshal because of his knowledge of the area, his ability to speak
32 several languages, and his marksmanship; as one of the most respected lawmen
33 working in Indian Territory, he achieved legendary status for the number of
34 criminals he captured and often under the most trying of circumstances; and
35 during his tenure as a marshal, Mr. Reeves arrested over 3,000 people; and

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1 WHEREAS, Mr. Reeves was regarded as incredibly just and knowledgeable
2 of the law, despite the fact that he was unable to read and write, having
3 never been taught because he was a slave; he remarried in 1900 to Winnie
4 Sumter, following the death of his first wife; and in 1902, Mr. Reeves even
5 arrested his own son, Bennie, for domestic murder; and

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7 WHEREAS, Mr. Reeves survived several assassination attempts and served
8 as a marshal in several jurisdictions until his retirement with 32 years of
9 service; and following his retirement from the United States Marshals
10 Service, Mr. Reeves worked for the Muskogee Police Department in Muskogee,
11 Oklahoma, when Oklahoma achieved statehood in 1907, for 2 years until he
12 developed Bright's Disease and died on January 12, 1910,

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14 NOW THEREFORE,

15 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE
16 STATE OF ARKANSAS, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN:

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18 THAT the General Assembly recognizes the courage, valor, and sacrifices
19 Mr. Bass Reeves made for this country on behalf of law enforcement and
20 salutes his efforts, and proclaims May 29, 2017, through June 3, 2017, as
21 Bass Reeves Law Enforcement Appreciation Week.

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23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that upon adoption of this resolution, a copy shall be
24 provided to the United States Marshal for the Western District of Arkansas by
25 the Secretary of the Senate.