

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, Rhoda Mae Kerr became the first female chief of the  
2 Austin Fire Department with her swearing in on January 30, 2009; and

3           WHEREAS, A native of New Jersey, Chief Kerr holds a  
4 bachelor's degree in physical education and health, an associate's  
5 degree in fire science technology, and a master's degree in public  
6 administration; she has also earned certification from the Harvard  
7 University program for senior executives in state and local  
8 government; and

9           WHEREAS, Chief Kerr taught physical education and health for  
10 12 years before joining the Fort Lauderdale Fire-Rescue Department  
11 in 1983, where for 20 years she was promoted through the ranks and  
12 eventually became the department's first female deputy chief; and

13           WHEREAS, In 2004, she was named the first female chief of the  
14 Little Rock Fire Department, making her only the 15th woman to lead  
15 a fire department in the nation; and

16           WHEREAS, Chief Kerr has long been a recognized leader in her  
17 profession, serving as head of the Human Relations Committee of the  
18 International Association of Fire Chiefs and as a board member of  
19 the National Society of Executive Fire Officers; she was also one of  
20 the founding members of the IAFC's Women Chief Officers Committee,  
21 and she is active in the Rotary Club and other community  
22 organizations as well; and

23           WHEREAS, In her new role in Austin, Rhoda Mae Kerr is  
24 responsible for a department of more than a thousand firefighters

1 operating out of 44 stations across the city; as a  
2 fourth-generation firefighter with 26 years of experience, Chief  
3 Kerr brings to the Capitol City considerable expertise, energy, and  
4 enthusiasm, and she is to be commended for her achievements as she  
5 prepares for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead; now,  
6 therefore, be it

7       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 81st Texas  
8 Legislature hereby congratulate Rhoda Mae Kerr on her selection as  
9 Austin's first female fire chief and extend to her sincere best  
10 wishes for continued success; and, be it further

11       RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
12 prepared for Chief Kerr as an expression of high regard by the Texas  
13 House of Representatives.

Bolton  
Naishtat  
Howard of Travis

H.R. No. 679

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Speaker of the House

I certify that H.R. No. 679 was adopted by the House on March 19, 2009, by a non-record vote.

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Chief Clerk of the House