

By: Bolton

H.R. No. 679

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.