

SENATE BILL 739

By Bell

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 15,
Chapter 2, Part 1, relative to designating
"Volunteer Firefighters Week."

WHEREAS, on October 9, 1871, the Great Chicago Fire killed more than 250 people, left 100,000 homeless, destroyed more than 17,400 structures, and burned more than 2,000 acres in 27 hours; and

WHEREAS, in 1920, President Woodrow Wilson issued the first National Fire Prevention Day proclamation and, since 1922, National Fire Prevention Week has been observed during the week in which October 9 falls on the calendar. In addition, the President of the United States has signed a proclamation pronouncing a day of national observance during that week every year since 1925; and

WHEREAS, the state recognizes October 9 each year as Firefighters' Memorial Day pursuant to § 15-2-119; and

WHEREAS, our nation was conceived by individuals who were willing to sacrifice their personal safety and concerns to ensure our individual and collective well-being, and the Volunteer State is especially proud to be the home of so many valiant men and women who have performed above and beyond the call of duty; and

WHEREAS, thousands of Tennesseans continue this time-honored tradition of volunteerism through service as firefighters; and

WHEREAS, these individuals daily face the rigors of corporal imperilment in protecting those whom they so selflessly serve; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee's fire departments, and volunteer firefighters, are dedicated to saving lives and property from the devastating effects of fire and are joined by the concerned citizens and government officials of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of those brave men and women who have put their lives on the line while fighting fires, and those who have lost that battle in order to save and protect their fellow citizens, the state of Tennessee is proud to dedicate a special week to remember and honor these fire heroes; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the honor and courage of volunteer firefighters in this state, and those who have given their lives in this noble cause, be especially recognized and remembered for the accomplishment of their high purposes; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 15, Chapter 2, Part 1, is amended by adding the following language as a new, appropriately designated section:

Section 15-2-121.

The first full week in March of each year shall be observed as "Volunteer Firefighters Week," to be proclaimed as such by the governor, to honor and recognize volunteer firefighters in this state for their courageous and dedicated service. Such day shall not be a legal holiday as defined in § 15-1-101.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.