

1 State of Arkansas
2 89th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2013

SR 33

4
5 By: Senator Hickey

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7 **SENATE RESOLUTION**

8 COMMEMORATING THE LIFE AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF ALONZO
9 JOHN WEMPLE, RAILROAD ENGINEER AND FIREMAN, AND
10 RECOGNIZING HIS SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN THE HISTORY OF
11 OUR COUNTRY.

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14 **Subtitle**

15 COMMEMORATING THE LIFE AND
16 ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF ALONZO JOHN WEMPLE,
17 RAILROAD ENGINEER AND FIREMAN, AND
18 RECOGNIZING HIS SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN THE
19 HISTORY OF OUR COUNTRY.

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21 WHEREAS, the year 2013 marks the 84th anniversary of the death of
22 railroad engineer Alonzo John Wemple; and

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24 WHEREAS, Mr. Wemple was born in Schenectady, New York, on October 1,
25 1833; he spent his entire professional life as a railroad man, working
26 throughout the United States; during that time, he was present at many
27 significant historical events of the era; and

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29 WHEREAS, while working as an engineer for the Illinois Central
30 Railroad during the Civil War, Mr. Wemple transported captured Confederate
31 soldiers to Union prison camps; and

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33 WHEREAS, in 1865, Mr. Wemple joined the elite group of engineers who
34 piloted the funeral train of President Abraham Lincoln, which transported
35 Lincoln's body, with stops for viewing, from Washington, D.C., through
36 Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, Indiana, and Chicago, and then on to



1 its final resting place in Springfield, Illinois; and

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3 WHEREAS, a few years later, Mr. Wemple was running a switch engine in
4 Illinois and witnessed the great Chicago fire that ravaged the city in 1871;
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7 WHEREAS, Mr. Wemple then moved to Texas, and from 1886 to 1888, he
8 piloted trains on the Texas and Pacific Railway that headed west from
9 Texarkana; he went on to settle in Bonham, Texas, where he piloted switch
10 engines for many years into the 1920s; and

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12 WHEREAS, on January 21, 1929, Mr. Wemple died in Fort Worth, Texas, at
13 the age of 95; and

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15 WHEREAS, his first wife was Charlotte Pennington and together they had
16 6 children, Frances, Minnie, Frederick, Mary, Charles, and Charlotte; and
17 after his wife's passing in 1892, Mr. Wemple married Pearly Lou Williams, and
18 they were the proud parents of a son, Judie Newton Wemple; and

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20 WHEREAS, the border cities of Texarkana, Arkansas, and Texarkana,
21 Texas, will host the first annual Railfest on May 11, 2013, and will honor
22 Mr. Wemple as a part of the festivities; and

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24 WHEREAS, history is made not only by the deeds of the famous but also
25 by the accumulated experience of countless individuals, and although Mr.
26 Wemple played only a small part, he was a witness to some of the most
27 important events of his time,

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29 NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE EIGHTY-NINTH GENERAL
30 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

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32 THAT the Senate wishes to commemorate the life and accomplishments of
33 Alonzo John Wemple, railroad engineer and fireman, and to recognize his
34 significant role in the history of our country.

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36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT upon adoption of this resolution, an appropriate

1 copy shall be provided to Mr. Dean Gibson, P.O. Box 906, Nash, Texas 75569,
2 on behalf of Mayor Wayne Smith and the Texarkana Historical Society & Museum
3 of Texarkana, Arkansas.

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