

**RESOLUTION**  
**R156-11/12**

*Opposition to H.B. 54 and S.B. 81, Proposed Amendments to the  
Alabama Underwater Cultural Resources Act*

**WHEREAS**, history is important to both the past and the future of the people of Selma and the protection of our historic resources is important to our city and has long been protected by city ordinances; and

**WHEREAS**, when it was discovered that historic resources in the Alabama River were being plundered and removed from the jurisdiction, the Mayor and the Selma City Council took steps to stop these actions; and

**WHEREAS**, the Alabama Underwater Cultural Resources Act, implemented in 2006, requires that any exploration or excavation of underwater cultural resources, or any recreational diving related to cultural resources, must receive a permit from the Alabama Historical Commission. Any theft or disturbance of these resources is currently subject to criminal penalties; and

**WHEREAS**, bills before the Alabama House (H.B. 54) and Senate (H.B. 81) would amend the Underwater Cultural Resources Act and would drastically limit its effectiveness in preserving underwater archaeological resources within the state's waterways by opening the door to widespread looting and undocumented mining and recovery of Civil War, Native American and Early American artifacts from Alabama waters and allowing artifacts to be legally recovered and transported out of Alabama and sold; and

**WHEREAS**, the interests of the City of Selma are not served by H.B. 54 or S.B. 81 as all historic sites with any underwater component such as Fort Morgan, Blakely, Africa Town and Selma will be unprotected. Alabama law prohibits the cutting of trees, mining of coal or digging of artifacts without a permit on state-owned lands. State waters deserve the same level of protection; and

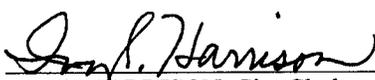
**WHEREAS**, time is of the essence as H.B. 54 has already passed the House Health Committee but is still in the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that Mayor George Patrick Evans and the Selma City Council wish to go on record as opposing H.B. 54 and S.B. 81 and urge all members of the House, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee and the Senate as a whole to vote against it.

**ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SELMA, ALABAMA,**  
**on this the 13<sup>th</sup> day of February 2012.**

  
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DR CECIL WILLIAMSON, President

ATTEST:

  
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IVY S. HARRISON, City Clerk

APPROVED:

  
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GEORGE P. EVANS, Mayor