

ALABAMA
Trust for Historic
PRESERVATION
Historic Places Make Life Better

July 29, 2016

Whereas, the State of Alabama Department of Mental health is the steward of Mount Vernon Arsenal and Searcy Hospital complex; and,

Whereas, Mount Vernon Arsenal was established in the 1830s on a cantonment site that was occupied by the United States military as early as 1811; and

Whereas, Mount Vernon Arsenal has seen almost continuous occupation for two centuries and played a role in the War of 1812, the Creek Wars, the Civil War, and the Indian Wars (including the incarceration of Geronimo and about 450 Apache from 1887-1894); and,

Whereas, the State of Alabama has administered the site since 1900 and subsequently developed it into Searcy Hospital, initially for treatment of mental health issues of African Americans during the Jim Crow era; and,

Whereas, Mount Vernon Arsenal and Searcy Hospital was integrated in the 1960s and eventually closed in 2012; and,

Whereas, the Mount Vernon Arsenal and Searcy Hospital complex possesses extraordinary historical and architectural significance to the state and the nation and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places; and,

Whereas, its current derelict condition is documented briefly in *Mount Vernon Arsenal and Searcy Hospital: The State of Alabama's National Treasure At Risk* (June 2016) and the outline of a proposed preservation plan is presented for consideration in the white paper that the Department of Mental Health welcomed in April 2016;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Board of the Alabama Trust for Historic Preservation encourages the Department of Mental Health to take prompt and appropriate action to insure the preservation and revitalization of Mount Vernon Arsenal and Searcy Hospital in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael Panhorst