

1 HR952  
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3 By Representative Merrill  
4 RFD:  
5 First Read: 09-JUN-11

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7  
8 CELEBRATING THE LIFE, LEGACY, AND WORKS OF JAMES  
9 ARNESS.

10  
11 WHEREAS, it is with a profound sense of loss that  
12 the death of James Arness is recorded; Mr. Arness died at his  
13 home in Los Angeles, California, on June 3, 2011, at the age  
14 of 88 years, while mourning his death, we take time to  
15 celebrate his remarkable life and say goodbye to our beloved  
16 television western hero, Marshal Matt Dillon, who presided  
17 over the frontier town of Dodge City; and

18 WHEREAS, Mr. Arness was born in Minneapolis and was  
19 the older brother of actor Peter Graves, who died in 2010;  
20 after high school, Mr. Arness enlisted in the US Army and  
21 served in WWII, where he was severely wounded during Operation  
22 Shingle at Anzio, Italy, in 1944; his decorations include: The  
23 Bronze Star Medal, the Purple Heart, the  
24 European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with three  
25 bronze battle stars, the World War II Victory Medal, and the  
26 Combat Infantryman Badge; and

1           WHEREAS, following his military service, Mr. Arness  
2 hitchhiked to Hollywood and began his acting career in 1947 as  
3 Loretta Young's brother in the movie, The Farmer's Daughter;  
4 upon the recommendation of his friend, actor John Wayne, Mr.  
5 Arness began his role of Marshal Dillon in 1955 in the series,  
6 Gunsmoke, which aired on CBS for 20 years; and

7           WHEREAS, after Gunsmoke, Mr. Arness, appeared in  
8 many other western-themed movies and television series; for  
9 his contribution to the television industry, Mr. Arness has a  
10 star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, was inducted into the  
11 Western Performers Hall of Fame at the National Cowboy and  
12 Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City, was inducted into  
13 the Santa Clarita Walk of Western Stars in 2006, was nominated  
14 for three Emmy Awards, and on the 50th Anniversary of  
15 television in 1989, was chosen by People magazine as the 6th  
16 top television star of all time; and

17           WHEREAS, a shy and sensitive man who enjoyed poetry,  
18 sail boat racing, and surfing, Mr. Arness' autobiography was  
19 released in 2001; while his height barred him from becoming  
20 the naval fighter pilot of his dreams, he cast a tall shadow  
21 as Marshal Matt Dillon, an enduring and endearing western  
22 hero; James Arness was genuinely loved as well as respected by  
23 those who knew him; now therefore,

24           BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF  
25 THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, That we take great pride in  
26 celebrating the life, legacy, and contributions of James  
27 Arness, and this resolution is offered in highest tribute to

1        him along with condolences to his family and the legion of  
2        admirers who will cherish his memory forever.