

First Extraordinary Session, 2011

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 10

BY REPRESENTATIVES DANAHAY, ARMES, FRANKLIN, GEYMANN, GUINN, HILL, AND KLECKLEY AND SENATORS MORRISH, MOUNT, SMITH, ADLEY, ALARIO, AMEDEE, APPEL, BROOME, CHABERT, CHAISSON, CHEEK, CLAITOR, CROWE, DONAHUE, DORSEY, ERDEY, GAUTREAU, GUILLOREY, HEITMEIER, JACKSON, KOSTELKA, LAFLEUR, LONG, MARIONNEAUX, MARTINY, MCPHERSON, MICHOT, MILLS, MORRELL, MURRAY, NEVERS, PERRY, PETERSON, QUINN, RISER, SHAW, THOMPSON, WALSWORTH, AND WILLARD-LEWIS

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To commend Jim Beam, a legendary Louisiana journalist, for more than fifty years of outstanding service with the Lake Charles *American Press*.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate to commend and celebrate Jim Beam, who has been reporting on Louisiana's politics and people for more than half a century; and

WHEREAS, Jim Beam is a vital participant in the legislative process through his unique perspective and knowledge and insightful commentary on the workings of state government in Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, it was a day of great celebration on October 7, 1933, when James Carroll "Jim" Beam was born in Lake Charles, Louisiana, to Charlie and Carrie Beam as the second of their five children; and

WHEREAS, after attending LaGrange and T. S. Cooley elementary schools, Mr. Beam graduated in 1951 as salutatorian from LaGrange High School, where he served as president of the student council and as a cheerleader and received the American history award; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Beam graduated from McNeese College in 1955 with a bachelor of arts degree in social studies and a minor in English; and

WHEREAS, it was at McNeese in 1953 when Mr. Beam met his future wife, JoAnn Drachenberg, and they were married on August 20, 1954; and

WHEREAS, on October 28, 1957, the Beams celebrated the birth of their first child, Jamie; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Beam taught American history, government, and English at Vinton and Marion high schools from 1958 until 1962 and spent his summers at Louisiana State University earning his master's degree in American history; and

WHEREAS, in 1960, Mr. Beam began his long and distinguished career at the Lake Charles *American Press* as a part-time sports reporter, and he became a full-time reporter fifty years ago, in 1961, under editor Truman Stacey; and

WHEREAS, in 1962, Mr. Beam wrote his first personal column, and that same year, on the twenty-fourth of September, his son, Bryan, was born; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Beam became the city editor of the newspaper in 1965, and in 1968, he covered for the first time the state's legislative session, which he has been covering on and off since that time and has covered full time since 2000; and

WHEREAS, from 1982 through 1992, Mr. Beam served as co-executive editor of the newspaper with Ward "Buddy" Threatt, and from 1992 until 1999, he served as executive editor; and

WHEREAS, in 1999, Mr. Beam "retired" from the newspaper, but not in the strictest definition of the word, for since 2000, he has been tirelessly covering the legislature, writing his biweekly column, and serving on the editorial board; and

WHEREAS, in 2003, Mr. Beam self-published *Positively Beaming: A Lifetime of Newspaper Columns*, and in 2008, he established the Jim Beam Scholarship in Journalism at McNeese State University with proceeds from the sale of his book; and

WHEREAS, in December of 2010, Mr. Beam was the first annual Hector San Miguel Memorial Fund award recipient in recognition of his outstanding achievements in journalism, relentless pursuit of the truth, and substantial positive impact on Southwest Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, Jim Beam is an institution in Louisiana politics who is known for his steadfast commitment to the highest journalistic ideals, and he has earned the unceasing admiration of the citizens of the state of Louisiana, whose knowledge and understanding of Louisiana politics and culture have been enriched immeasurably by his singular talents and dedication; and

WHEREAS, Jim Beam is recognized as a true pioneer of political reporting in Louisiana, and he is renowned for his unforgettable coverage of key events in the state's

history and his significant contributions to the field of journalism, a field so critical to effective democratic government; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Beam is highly regarded for earning the trust and admiration of the state's lawmakers and is widely respected and admired for his integrity by those who walk the halls of the state capitol; and

WHEREAS, Jim Beam merits a special measure of commendation for an extraordinary career in journalism.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend Jim Beam, a legendary Louisiana journalist, for more than fifty years of outstanding service with the Lake Charles *American Press*, does hereby recognize and record for posterity his achievements and contributions as a distinguished and one-of-a-kind chronicler of Louisiana life and politics, does hereby express enduring gratitude for the tremendous pride and honor that he brings to his family, friends, and colleagues, the city of Lake Charles, and the state of Louisiana, and does hereby extend to him every good wish for continued success and happiness in his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Jim Beam.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE