

Regular Session, 2010

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 11

BY REPRESENTATIVE ANDERS

SPECIAL DAY/WEEK/MONTH: Recognizes May 22, 2010, as Will Haney Day in Ferriday

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To recognize Saturday, May 22, 2010, as Will Haney Day in Ferriday.

3 WHEREAS, it is appropriate to recognize Saturday, May 22, 2010, as Will Haney
4 Day in Ferriday in honor of his outstanding contributions to blues music as operator of
5 Haney's Big House; and

6 WHEREAS, born in Vidalia, Will Haney served with great pride and valor in the
7 United States Army, was stationed in France during World War I, and earned the rank of
8 first sergeant; and

9 WHEREAS, after returning from military service following World War I, Will
10 Haney sold life and accident insurance as a representative of People's Life Insurance of New
11 Orleans; and

12 WHEREAS, during the floods of the 1930s and 1940s, many of Mr. Haney's
13 policyholders were unable to work, so Mr. Haney traveled to New Orleans to tell the
14 company that he would not allow his customers' policies to lapse due to the flood; and

15 WHEREAS, after turning over the insurance business to a relative, Will Haney
16 opened a barbeque joint that had a dirt floor, paneled walls that ran halfway up the building,
17 and a screen that ran above the walls to the ceiling; and

18 WHEREAS, by the late 1930s, Will Haney constructed a barroom at the same
19 location and called the place Haney's, creating what would eventually become the legendary
20 Haney's Big House; and

1 WHEREAS, after enlarging his business, the bluesmen of the Mississippi Delta and
2 the jazzmen of New Orleans would often travel to Ferriday to play at Haney's; and

3 WHEREAS, Will Haney operated the famous nightclub known worldwide as Haney's
4 Big House in Ferriday, Louisiana, during the 1940s and 1950s; and

5 WHEREAS, Haney's Big House was a part of what is known as the "chitlin circuit",
6 playing host to legends of blues music, including Fats Domino, Duke Ellington, Louis
7 Armstrong, B.B. King, Irma Thomas, and Percy Sledge, among others; and

8 WHEREAS, blues music is the most influential form of American roots music, and
9 its impact is heard around the world in rock 'n' roll, jazz, rhythm and blues, country, and
10 classic musical; and

11 WHEREAS, with the success of Haney's Big House, Mr. Haney built a two-story
12 motel called Haney's Motel behind the club to accommodate musicians and patrons; and

13 WHEREAS, the glory years of Haney's Big House spanned about two decades before
14 a fire destroyed the entire block in 1966, and Haney's property burned to the ground and was
15 never rebuilt; and

16 WHEREAS, Will Haney was a loving husband to his wife Lillie and a devoted father
17 to his only daughter, Willie, who attended an all-girls college in North Carolina; and

18 WHEREAS, Will Haney passed away after becoming ill during the late 1960s, but
19 his legacy lives on forever in the minds and hearts of the people of Ferriday; and

20 WHEREAS, as an African American man during turbulent times, Will Haney made
21 a place in history for both himself and Ferriday that will never be surpassed; and

22 WHEREAS, Ferriday recently joined a handful of cities outside Mississippi,
23 including Chicago, Memphis, New Orleans, and London, that were selected to receive a
24 Mississippi Blues Trail marker, and the marker is being placed at the site of Haney's Big
25 House in honor of the legendary blues musicians that played there; and

26 WHEREAS, May 22, 2010, has been proclaimed Will Haney Day by the town of
27 Ferriday; and

28 WHEREAS, thanks to the success of Will Haney and Haney's Big House, Ferriday
29 became legendary and continues to stand out in music culture today.

1 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
2 recognize Saturday, May 22, 2010, as Will Haney Day in Ferriday, does hereby
3 posthumously commend Will Haney for his contributions to blues music as operator of
4 Haney's Big House, and does hereby extend enduring appreciation for the tremendous pride
5 and honor that this wonderful man continues to bring to the citizens of the town of Ferriday
6 and the state of Louisiana.

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted
8 to Glen B. McGlothlin, Jr., mayor of the town of Ferriday.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

Anders

HCR No. 11

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