

2015 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 229

BY REPRESENTATIVE ST. GERMAIN

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the United States Board on Geographic Names to name the entrance of Buffalo Cove in the Atchafalaya Basin as Skerrett Point and to authorize and request the Department of Transportation and Development and the Department of Natural Resources to take any action necessary to propose this commemorative name proposal to the United States Board on Geographic Names.

WHEREAS, the Atchafalaya Basin is America's largest river swamp at one hundred miles long and covers approximately eight hundred thousand acres; and

WHEREAS, the Atchafalaya is home to over one hundred different species of fish and aquatic life, sixty-five species of reptiles and amphibians, and two hundred fifty known species of birds, as well as the largest crop of wild crawfish in the world; and

WHEREAS, the Atchafalaya contains the largest continuous bottomland hardwood forest in the nation and is the only land-developing river delta in North America, which is only one of six in the world; and

WHEREAS, the value of the basin's fish, wildlife, and related recreational resources has been estimated at over one hundred million dollars annually and the value of the oil and gas, timber, and shipping is equal to that figure; and

WHEREAS, the Atchafalaya is an important floodway, carrying one-third of the waters of the Mississippi River, beginning below Natchez, safely to the Gulf of Mexico, protecting the cities of Baton Rouge and New Orleans from potential flooding; and

WHEREAS, the state of Louisiana, working with several federal agencies, began efforts in the 1970s to enhance and promote the Atchafalaya, and those efforts have continued until the present day; and

WHEREAS, one of the areas selected for project enhancement by the state of Louisiana and the United States Army Corps of Engineers was Buffalo Cove; and

WHEREAS, B. E. M. "Ben" Skerret, III, Lafayette businessman, avid sportsman, an original member of Governor W. Fox McKeithen's 1971 Governor's Commission on the Atchafalaya Basin, and icon in the decades-long effort to preserve the basin, was instrumental in the selection of Buffalo Cove as a project site; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Skerrett was cited as a recipient of the 42nd Governor's State Conservation Achievement Award for his passion to preserve the Atchafalaya Basin, and particularly, his efforts to implement the Buffalo Cove Water Management Unit as a means of restoring the water quality and productivity to that popular basin fishing ground; and

WHEREAS, the groundbreaking for the Buffalo Cove project was December 2, 2005, only a few short weeks after his death.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the United States Board on Geographic Names to name the entrance of Buffalo Cove in the Atchafalaya Basin as Skerrett Point and to authorize and request the Department of Transportation and Development and the Department of Natural Resources to take any action necessary to propose this commemorative name proposal to the United States Board on Geographic Names.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the executive secretary of the United States Board on Geographic Names and the secretaries of the Department of Transportation and Development and the Department of Natural Resources.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE