

2016 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 106

BY REPRESENTATIVES BAGLEY, CARMODY, COX, GLOVER, HORTON, MIKE
JOHNSON, JIM MORRIS, NORTON, REYNOLDS, AND SEABAUGH

A RESOLUTION

To express the condolences of the House of Representatives upon the death of Jerry
Barksdale Byrd, Sr.

WHEREAS, the members of the House of Representatives were saddened to learn
of the departure from this life of Jerry Barksdale Byrd, Sr., on April 21, 2016, at the age of
eighty; and

WHEREAS, the second of Frank Carl and Annie Laura Byrd's four sons, Jerry Byrd
was born October 4, 1935, and just thirteen years after his arrival on Earth, Jerry's first
written work appeared in the Shreveport Journal in the form of a scouting report published
in the *Shreveport Journal*; and

WHEREAS, Jerry Byrd was the first boy scout in the Norwella Council to win the
Quill Scroll Award, given to scouts who publish more than twenty thousand words; it was
the first of many awards for one of Louisiana's most decorated sports journalists; and

WHEREAS, at Hamilton Terrace Junior High School, Jerry Byrd played left tackle
on a team that went unbeaten, untied, and was not scored on but despite the team's success,
Jerry realized that he belonged in the press box and not on the field; he transferred to Fair
Park High School in his junior year where he found his niche on the school's newspaper, the
Pow Wow, and was sports editor his senior year; and

WHEREAS, Jerry Byrd majored in journalism at Northwestern State College,
worked as a manager for the Northwestern State Demon basketball team, ran and won an
intramural cross country race, and was sports editor and elected as editor of the *Current
Sauce*, Northwestern State's school newspaper; and

WHEREAS, Jerry graduated from Northwestern State on May 28, 1957, and began his professional journalism career the very next morning at the *Shreveport Journal*; some thirteen years later, Jerry Byrd was named sports editor of the paper and retained his position until the *Journal* ceased publication in 1991; he published a column in every weekday edition for more than six years; and

WHEREAS, Jerry Byrd was sports editor of the *Minden Press Herald* and the *Bossier Press Tribune*; he held the position at the *Tribune* from 1993-2012; and

WHEREAS, in 1992, Jerry Byrd became the first recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Louisiana Track & Field Coaches Association; he is the only sportswriter to be selected "Mr. Basketball" by the Louisiana Basketball Coaches Association; in 1996, he received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Louisiana Sportswriters Association; he was inducted in the Louisiana High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame in 2001, only the second sportswriter so honored; the Contribution to Amateur Football award was given to Jerry Byrd in 2005 from the S.M. McNaughton Chapter of the National Football Foundation; in 2006, he received the Nth Degree from Northwestern State University for lifetime achievement; and in 2012, Jerry Byrd was inducted into the Ark-La-Tex Sports Museum of Champions; and

WHEREAS, Jerry Barksdale Byrd, Sr., founded and coached the Shreveport Track Club and coached the City of Shreveport Swim Team; he organized the High Five Track & Field Series and the Meet of Champions; and

WHEREAS, most are blessed to find one true love in this life, but Jerry found two; he married Patricia "Pat" Ann Hood on June 12, 1965, and to this union, Tricia and Jerry, Jr., were born; Pat Byrd left her beloved Jerry for an eternal home in 2001; in June 2003, Jerry met Barbara Copeland and the couple were married two months later; and

WHEREAS, although the departure of a loved one leaves a void that can never be filled, family, friends, and colleagues will fondly recall good times shared with Jerry Barksdale Byrd, Sr., and left to cherish his memory are Barbara, his wife; son Jerry Jr., and wife Amanda, and daughter Tricia Hagan; brothers Ronald James Byrd and wife Donna, John Alan Byrd and wife Delaine, and Thomas Everett Byrd and wife Kay; grandchildren Logan, Dakota, and Jordan Ward, Caleb Stacey, Caitlin Byrd, and Emily and Katy Bailey; and

WHEREAS, Jerry Barksdale Byrd, Sr., was a husband, brother, father, sportswriter, legend, and an icon in journalism, and Louisiana mourns the loss of one of her native sons who wrote for more than fifty years about sports and provided reading entertainment to thousands.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express deepest sympathies to the family and friends of Jerry Barksdale Byrd, Sr., and does hereby extend best hopes for comfort and peace to all whose hearts are hurting at the loss of this journalism legend.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the family of Jerry Barksdale Byrd, Sr.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES