

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 13

BY SENATOR MORRELL AND REPRESENTATIVE BROSSETT

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To express the sincere and heartfelt condolences of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the death of Leon "Smokey" Brier, a lifelong resident of the Gentilly neighborhood in New Orleans, Louisiana, and a man of character known for his good deeds and kind heart.

WHEREAS, Smokey Brier was a compassionate person filled with the milk of human kindness, a true gentleman, and genuine friend to all; and

WHEREAS, Smokey Brier was born February 17, 1913, on Orleans Avenue near Bayou St. John and celebrated his ninety-ninth birthday this year; and

WHEREAS, he served his country in World War II in both the European and Pacific Theatres of War as a company cook in Marseilles, France and Okinawa, Japan; and

WHEREAS, when he returned to New Orleans after an honorable discharge, he was employed in several occupations throughout the city that included work as a clothing presser for a laundry; and

WHEREAS, having worked all of his life, Smokey Brier was a self-made man, who learned the value of generosity, positive motivation, and friendship; he also knew that life was worthy of living to its fullest; he had a vitality about him that was infectious; and he lifted the spirits of those around him with a wink and a smile; and

WHEREAS, from his two-story yellow house on Gentilly Boulevard, Smokey Brier warmly greeted everyone who passed by his front door, invited them to sit on the porch for awhile, shared a story or two, laughed, and discussed the happenings of the day in his role as the charismatic mayor and spiritual father of the neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, Smokey was a fixture at every Jazz Fest as he loved to listen to music and to dance and he would ride his three-wheeled bike down to the French Quarter to be moved by the rhythms drifting in the streets and to dance with all the pretty ladies; and

WHEREAS, Smokey Brier felt a gladness in his heart and a closeness to his God as

he regularly attended mass at St. Peter Claver Catholic Church; and

WHEREAS, he was a loving and dedicated husband of fifty-two years to his beloved wife, Bernice Despues Brier, until her passing in 1987; and

WHEREAS, he was born before the advent of television, digital technology, or space travel, but was a witness to man's walk on the moon, miracles of medicine, and many other technical wonders that were unheard of only a few short decades ago; and

WHEREAS, Smokey Brier had witnessed all manner of historic and political milestones during his near century of living that included women's suffrage, the Modern Civil Rights Movement, minority voting rights legislation, and in 2008, proudly cast his vote for the election of President of the United States, Barack Obama; and

WHEREAS, Smokey was a die-hard New Orleans Saints fan since the 1960s and reveled in the glory of their 2010 Super Bowl victory; and

WHEREAS, with his keen attention to detail, Smokey shared his life's experiences, local history, and childhood memories with family and friends, who then gazed in wonder as they heard of the events he had seen and participated in, firsthand; and

WHEREAS, Smokey Brier was the embodiment of the joy of living, *joie de vivre*, empathy, strength, and comfort; the genuine article, a true altruist who cared for everyone, and whose compassion for his fellow man knew no bounds; and

WHEREAS, Smokey Brier was struck down on February 23, 2012, not by the ravages of time for he was in excellent health, but by the heinous act of another, someone who snuffed out his light needlessly and thoughtlessly; and

WHEREAS, upon his untimely death, the community lost a unique individual and a colorful character who left such an indelible mark upon the lives of all who knew and loved him and benefitted from his thoughtfulness and generous spirit; and

WHEREAS, he is survived by a daughter, Jean Brier Craddock, four grandchildren, ten great-grandchildren, thirteen great-great-grandchildren, and a host of family members and many, many close friends.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express sincere and heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of Leon "Smokey" Brier, whose passing leaves a tear in the fabric of the Gentilly neighborhood of New Orleans.

SCR NO. 13

ENROLLED

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to his daughter, Jean Brier Craddock.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES