

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 177

BY SENATORS ADLEY, ALARIO, AMEDEE, APPEL, BROOME, CHABERT, CHAISSON, CHEEK, CLAITOR, CROWE, DONAHUE, DORSEY, DUPLESSIS, ERDEY, B. GAUTREAUX, N. GAUTREAUX, GUILLORY, HEBERT, HEITMEIER, JACKSON, KOSTELKA, LAFLEUR, LONG, MARIONNEAUX, MARTINY, MCPHERSON, MICHOT, MORRELL, MORRISH, MOUNT, MURRAY, NEVERS, PETERSON, QUINN, RISER, SHAW, SMITH, THOMPSON AND WALSWORTH

A RESOLUTION

To commend Charlie Smith, lobbyist extraordinaire and political consultant, upon his selection as an inductee into the Louisiana Political Hall of Fame for 2011.

WHEREAS, it is altogether fitting and proper to congratulate Charlie Smith for this auspicious honor; and

WHEREAS, very few mortals reach the status of legend in the world of politics, in particular, someone who has never held an elective office; and

WHEREAS, Charlie Smith has been an integral part of the State Capital community for over forty years; and

WHEREAS, Charlie Smith has reached that pinnacle and rose far beyond it to the stratosphere of near political nirvana; he is without peer in the world of lobbying and persuasion; and

WHEREAS, Charlie possesses a wealth of knowledge on many complex issues that include arts and humanities, business law, natural resources and mineral production, film and entertainment, music, and workmen's compensation; and

WHEREAS, Charlie was born in Mobile, Alabama, reared in Slidell, Louisiana, attended Southeastern Louisiana University, and later graduated from LSU with a Bachelors of Arts degree in Journalism where he often voiced opinions at Free Speech Alley, was active in the Young Democrats campus organization, and developed a fervor for LSU Tiger football; and

WHEREAS, he began with representation of the Louisiana Municipal Association and soon after that, a power-wielding client, Associated General Contractors; the time was 1968 and "old-time" politics was the order of the day; dictated by movers and shakers confecting deals in smoke-filled rooms over cards and Kentucky bourbon; and

WHEREAS, in the thick of it was Charlie Smith, a master of riding the roller coaster of legislative procedure, managing legislators like bull-riding at the rodeo; goading them as they emerge from the chute, spurs a'gleaming; sometimes making the "8 second ride" and sometimes being bucked off; and

WHEREAS, in 1970, Charlie Smith became Executive Director of the Construction Industry Legislative Council, a loose-knit association of contractors, engineers, architects, and sub-contractors, by itself no easy task to herd that group; and

WHEREAS, Charlie tackled the monumental labor management political battles of all time such as, Right To Work, Workers' Compensation, Unemployment Compensation Reform, and the repeal of the Prevailing Wage Law; and

WHEREAS, for eighteen years Charlie was a well-connected, extremely successful political strategist, however, his hard-charging, "take no prisoners," fast paced life had begun to spin out of control; in 1987, he had a moment of clarity, stopped his world in the midst of all his success, did a complete about face, stepped away from the political scene, and took up the laid back life style of a poet and bohemian in the French Quarter of New Orleans; and

WHEREAS, he eked out a meager living, wrote compositions and poems, published several books of poetry, *Last Call*, *Still Waiting for Last Call*, and *Throw Me Something Mistuh*, a reflective look at his life both past and present; he was once arrested for selling poetry without proper municipal authorization, to which he commented, "There is no poetic license in New Orleans."; and

WHEREAS, after a seven year hiatus, Charlie Smith returned to the capital in 1994, to take up the lobbyist mantle once again with the same tenacity as before, but less of the bravado, with his life now on a more even keel, steady, assured, ready to go to work as an advocate for funding for the arts, environmental issues, historic preservation, fishing industries, humane societies, parishes, and municipalities; and

WHEREAS, Charlie Smith has helped to change the landscape for the arts, to promote its worth, to elevate the necessity of arts in education, and to find financial support of such worthy causes as Louisiana Artworks, the Contemporary Art Center in New Orleans, and the conservation of the Grand Opera House in Crowley, to name but a few; and

WHEREAS, Charlie Smith, the elder statesman of lobbyists and proud ardent

admirer of the people and institution of the legislative process, is well known for his pleasant demeanor and kind heart, his affection for animals, his writing, and his passion for Louisiana, her culture, and her people; and

WHEREAS, he is happily married to his wife, Donna; and

WHEREAS, his children hold his heart in their hands, his daughters, Kimberly and Cristina Noel, and his son and business partner, Tracy Donovan Smith; and

WHEREAS, Charlie Smith describes himself as the patron saint of previously lost causes, and politically unconventional, which from most points of view, is only the tip of the iceberg.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend Charlie Smith, lobbyist and political analyst, for his selection and future induction into the Louisiana Political Hall of Fame for 2011.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Charlie Smith of Smith and Associates.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE