

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 70

BY SENATOR LONG

A RESOLUTION

To recognize April 28, 2016, as The Gideons International Day at the State Capitol.

WHEREAS, The Gideons International was founded in 1899, serves as an extended missionary arm of the church, and is the oldest association of Christian businessmen and professional men in the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, in the fall of 1898, John H. Nicholson of Janesville, Wisconsin, came to the Central Hotel at Boscobel, Wisconsin, and, because the hotel was full and crowded, he was asked to take a bed in a double room with Samuel E. Hill of Beloit, Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS, the two men soon discovered that both were Christians, and after their evening devotions together and on their knees before God, the thoughts were given which later developed into an association; and

WHEREAS, on May 31, 1899, the two men met again at Beaver Dam, Wisconsin, where they concluded to band Christian commercial travelers together for mutual recognition, personal evangelism, and united service for the Lord; and

WHEREAS, they decided to call a meeting in Janesville, Wisconsin, on July 1, 1899, in the Y.M.C.A.; and

WHEREAS, only three men were present at that first meeting: John H. Nicholson, Samuel E. Hill, and Will J. Knights; and

WHEREAS, they organized with Mr. Hill as president, Mr. Knights as vice president, and Mr. Nicholson as secretary and treasurer; and

WHEREAS, much thought and prayer was given to what the name of the association should be, and after special prayer, Mr. Knights arose from his knees and said, "We shall be

called Gideons", he then read the sixth and seventh chapters of the book of Judges, which explained the reason for adopting that name; and

WHEREAS, almost all of the Gideons in the early years were traveling men, and when the question arose regarding how they might be more effective witnesses in the hotels where they spent so much of their time, one trustee suggested that the Gideons furnish a Bible for each bedroom of the hotels in the United States, and this began the "Bible Project"; and

WHEREAS, it has been just over one hundred years since The Gideons International placed the first Bible in a hotel room in Montana; and

WHEREAS, Bibles and New Testaments are placed in hotels, motels, hospitals, convalescent homes, medical offices, domestic violence centers, prisons, and jails, and are personally distributed by members of The Gideons International to groups such as students in the fifth grade and above, prisoners, police, fire, medical, military personnel, and anyone else the Gideons witness to individually; and

WHEREAS, today there are over 300,000 Gideons and Auxiliary members (wives of Gideons) in more than eleven thousand nine hundred local groups worldwide, and organized in more than one hundred ninety countries around the globe; and

WHEREAS, Bibles and New Testaments are printed for distribution by The Gideons International in more than ninety languages; and

WHEREAS, between 1999 and 2013, over one billion scriptures were shared, which were more scriptures than in the previous ninety years; and

WHEREAS, over two billion Bibles and New Testaments have been distributed worldwide since 1908, more than one billion Bibles and New Testaments were distributed in the last fourteen years, and more than eighty-eight million copies of God's Word were distributed just last year; and

WHEREAS, with the support of The Gideons International, the Louisiana Gideons have more than fifty Gideon camps in the state of Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, the success of the state of Louisiana, the strength of our communities, and the overall vitality of American society depend, in great measure, upon dedicated individuals and organizations like the Gideons.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby recognize April 28, 2016, as The Gideons International Day at the State Capitol.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Louisiana Gideons and The Gideons International.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE