

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION HONORING BALLET WEST

2024 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Luz Escamilla

House Sponsor: _____

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This resolution honors the 80th anniversary of Ballet West's "The Nutcracker."

Highlighted Provisions:

This resolution:

- ▶ honors the founder of Ballet West, Willam Christensen;
- ▶ recognizes Ballet West's annual performance of "The Nutcracker" as the first and original version of the ballet in the United States; and
- ▶ celebrates the 80th anniversary of Ballet West's "The Nutcracker."

Special Clauses:

None

Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein:

WHEREAS, Utah is home to America's first and original version of "The Nutcracker";

WHEREAS, born and raised in Brigham City, Willam Christensen, known as Mr. C, received ballet training from his uncle and then went on to change the face of dance in America;

WHEREAS, after dancing on the vaudeville circuit, Mr. C founded the San Francisco Ballet in 1942;

WHEREAS, in 1944, during World War II, Mr. C choreographed the first full-length version of "The Nutcracker" in the United States for the San Francisco Ballet;



28 WHEREAS, Mr. C later returned to Utah where he founded the first accredited ballet
29 program in a university setting in the United States at the University of Utah, and presented the
30 Utah premiere of his "The Nutcracker" in 1955;

31 WHEREAS, in 1963, Mr. C founded Utah's Ballet West, which has performed the
32 choreography of America's first "The Nutcracker" annually ever since;

33 WHEREAS, more than 300 children participate in the production run of "The
34 Nutcracker" each year;

35 WHEREAS, when asked how long "The Nutcracker" would continue, Mr. C responded,
36 "It will go on for as long as there are children.";

37 WHEREAS, each year more than 35,000 people experience Mr. C's "The Nutcracker"
38 in person;

39 WHEREAS, 2024 marks the 80th anniversary of Mr. C's, Utah's, and America's "The
40 Nutcracker";

41 WHEREAS, Willam Christensen's "The Nutcracker" is a national treasure that sparked
42 an artistic phenomenon and Christmas-time tradition for Utahns and people around the world,
43 making it a special and unique aspect of Utah's history and influence in the arts; and

44 WHEREAS, Willam Christensen's "The Nutcracker," owned by Ballet West, has been
45 called a landmark artistic experience:

46 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the
47 Governor concurring therein, hereby celebrate the 80th anniversary of America's first
48 "Nutcracker."

49 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor acknowledge
50 Willam Christensen's and Utah's contribution to the artistic phenomenon, community
51 connection, and holiday traditions that have been created by "The Nutcracker."

52 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor recognize Salt
53 Lake City, Utah as the Home of America's First "Nutcracker."

54 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor celebrate Ballet
55 West's performance of Willam Christensen's "The Nutcracker" as a Utah Living Historic
56 Landmark.

57 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to Ballet West.