

July 12, 1999

Honorable Alfred W. Speer
Clerk of the House of Representatives
State Capitol
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

RE: HB 2208 BY REPRESENTATIVE COPELIN

To amend and reenact Section 4.A. of Act No. 541 of the 1976 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature, as amended, and R.S. 51:291 and 293, relative to the Louisiana Stadium and Exposition District; to name and designate the Louisiana Superdome as the John J. McKeithen Superdome; to require legislative approval of any amendment to the contract or lease with the New Orleans franchise of the National Football League; and to provide for related matters.

Dear Mr. Speer:

Among other legal effects, House Bill No. 2208 would name the Louisiana Superdome as the "John J. McKeithen Superdome." Had it not been for Governor McKeithen there would have been no Louisiana Superdome and none of the enormous economic and social benefits which all of the people of this great state have enjoyed since its construction. Many Louisianians, including me, share the feeling of the legislature that the dome should bear the name of Governor McKeithen; but as usual, life's choices are not as simple as we would like them to be. While great support for doing so has been expressed, there has been expressed substantial concern that doing so could have serious economic consequences for the future of the dome and its economic impact on our state.

Under present law the Louisiana Stadium and Exposition District Commission (Commission) and the governor already have the authority to honor the former governor in this way. Thus, the bill is not needed for this purpose if that is to be the decision. But if the bill becomes law, it would preclude further discussions before the Commission which could lead to appropriate honor and recognition for the former governor while at the same time avoid adversely affecting the future economic benefits and viability of the Louisiana Superdome. If the Commission fails to develop a suitable alternative which is acceptable to the McKeithen family, then I plan to use my influence to honor Governor McKeithen by naming the dome as provided in House Bill No. 2208.

For these reasons, I am vetoing and returning House Bill No. 2208 to you.

Sincerely,

M.J. "Mike" Foster, Jr.