

2017 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 210

BY REPRESENTATIVE MARINO

A RESOLUTION

To commend Darryl Joseph "Big Chief Mut-Mut" Montana upon his retirement and for his many accomplishments and dedication to his heritage.

WHEREAS, "Big Chief" Darryl Montana is the youngest son of the late Allison "Big Chief Tootie" Montana and Joyce Francis Montana, born on April 8, 1955, and the husband of Sabrina Mays-Montana; and

WHEREAS, "Big Chief" Darryl Montana is the fourth generation of the Montana's Black Masking Indian tradition heritage that began in the late 1800s with his great, great grandmother's brother, Becate Batiste, the legendary founding father of Big Chief of the Creole Wild West, who, in honor of his Creole and Indian heritage, created the first organized tribe in the Seventh Ward; and

WHEREAS, Darryl's father, Allison "Big Chief Tootie" Montana, world renowned Chief of Chiefs, Chief of the Monogram Hunters, and Chief of the Yellow Pocahontas Mardi Gras Indian Tribe, established in 1919, dedicated more than fifty-four years to the indigenous cultural tradition of "masking as a Black Indian"; and

WHEREAS, at the age of six, "Big Chief" Darryl Montana earned weekly allowances by cutting and bottling sequins, beads, and stones from his father's old Indian suits, and in 1965, at the age of ten, he used money from washing cars at a body and fender shop located under his home and his weekly allowances to purchase materials for his first Indian suit for Carnival in 1966; and

WHEREAS, while Mr. Montana masked in the Yellow Pocahontas (Hunters) Tribe with his father for more than fifteen years before getting a position within the tribe, he honed the skills necessary to create, design, and sew his suits, under his father's close guidance, learning and respecting the rules of masking as a Black Indian; and

WHEREAS, he was Trial Chief, Second Chief, and, in 1997, became Big Chief of the Yellow Pocahontas Black Masking Indian Tribe, earning praise from local, national, and international communities and artists for his meticulous attention to detail in creating three-dimensional designs for each suit; and

WHEREAS, "Big Chief" Darryl Montana's exquisite suits have been exhibited locally, nationally, and internationally at many festivals and cultural events; he is a 2012 recipient of the Joan Mitchell Foundation Painter and Sculptor Award, a 2014 USA Artists Glasgow Fellow, Crafts and Traditional Arts, a 2015 New Orleans Arts Council Community Arts Award Honoree, and, in 2017, one of seventy-three selected national and international artists in Prospect 4 in New Orleans; and

WHEREAS, "Big Chief" Darryl Montana maintained the integrity of the culture and tradition of "masking" and viewed his participation as an act of service for his family and community and earned the admiration of his family, peers, and a world community for sharing annual gifts of extraordinary Black Masking Indian suits; and

WHEREAS, "Big Chief" Darryl Montana officially retired on Carnival Day, 2017, as Big Chief of the Yellow Pocahontas Tribe, after forty-eight years as a Black Masking Indian.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend Darryl Joseph "Big Chief Mut-Mut" Montana upon his retirement and for his many accomplishments and dedication to his heritage, culture, and traditions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Darryl Joseph "Big Chief Mut-Mut" Montana.

---

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES