SLS 18RS-755 ORIGINAL

2018 Regular Session

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 36

BY SENATOR MILKOVICH

CONDOLENCES. Expresses condolences upon the death of William P. Black Sr. of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, known for his decades-long children's television persona, Buckskin Bill.

1	A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
2	To express the sincere condolences of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the death of
3	William P. Black Sr. of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, known for his decades-long
4	children's television persona, Buckskin Bill.
5	WHEREAS, William P. Black Sr. of Baton Rouge was most widely known as
6	"Buckskin Bill", host of local programming for children's television; and
7	WHEREAS, Bill Black was born in 1929 in Haileyville, Oklahoma, to Harvey and
8	Amelia Black and he died peacefully on Wednesday, January 10, 2018, at his home in Baton
9	Rouge; and
10	WHEREAS, Mr. Black graduated from Classen High School in Oklahoma City,
11	attended Oklahoma A & M, which would officially become Oklahoma State University in
12	1957, and received a bachelor's degree in speech with a minor in history from Arkansas State
13	College; and
14	WHEREAS, while in college in Arkansas, Bill Black met Elma, who would become
15	the love of his life, and the two married in April 1952, beginning an amazing life of love the
16	two shared for more than six decades and they were the proud parents of three children: Ann,
17	Bucky, and Ginger; and
18	WHEREAS, Mr. Black served honorably in the United States Army during the

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1	Korean War era, during which he traveled around the country as an emcee and entertainer,
2	boosting the morale of troops across the country; and
3	WHEREAS, in 1955, Bill and Elma Black moved to Baton Rouge where Bill began
4	his career as a broadcaster and television entertainer and later in that year, the local
5	television program, an outgrowth of Black's local television program "Storyland", "The
6	Buckskin Bill Show" debuted in 1955 to entertain children across the broadcast area; and
7	WHEREAS, the program was aired until 1988 and at the time it was taken off the air
8	it was the longest running children's family television program in the nation; and
9	WHEREAS, the foundation of the program was the education of children and Bill
10	Black used his platform to inspire his young viewers to take part in calling for several
11	important civic improvements in the Baton Rouge area, including the establishment of a
12	local zoo, promotion of the Louisiana School for the Deaf, and advocacy for the Boy Scouts
13	of America, as examples; and
14	WHEREAS, for fifteen years, Bill Black ended his program on WAFB-TV with the
15	slogan, "Baton Rouge needs a zoo", encouraging his audience to become a voice in the
16	community, a lesson that many of his young viewers took to heart as they grew up in Baton
17	Rouge; and
18	WHEREAS, the Baton Rouge Zoo became a reality on Easter Sunday of 1970 and
19	shortly thereafter, Buckskin Bill Black began the "Elephant March" on his program, urging
20	his young watchers to save their pennies and donate them to the zoo to purchase two
21	elephants; with a total collection of 650,000 pennies, or 6,500 dollars, the elephants were
22	purchased for the zoo and appropriately named "Penny" and "Penny Too"; and
23	WHEREAS, Bill Black's legacy lives on beyond his years as a beloved television
24	personality with the current mascot at the zoo being named "Penny"; and
25	WHEREAS, the well-being of children beyond their own was always a passion for
26	the Black's as a couple and Elma, who as a parenting and drug abuse specialist, helped found
27	the "I Care" program in the East Baton Rouge Parish schools, a program that provides drug,
28	violence, and crisis counseling throughout the parish and which has been a successful
29	program for decades; and

WHEREAS, Bill Black retired from television in 1990, but reentered public life in

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1994 when he was elected to the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board, where he served until 2010; and

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WHEREAS, throughout his life, Bill Black was singled out for his good citizenship and his concern for the community, including accolades from the National Association of Broadcasters; Baton Rouge's highest civic honor, the Golden Deeds award; and he received the Baton Rouge Council on Human Relations' annual Humanitarian Award; and

WHEREAS, while affecting his community in countless positive ways, Bill Black became a beloved personality around the city with legions of adults who grew up enjoying his program and enlisting in his causes, all expressing devotion to a man who taught them countless lessons in good citizenship, even beyond the action of collecting pennies.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express sincere condolences upon the death of William P. Black Sr. of Baton Rouge, known for his decades-long children's television persona, Buckskin Bill and his years of community service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the family of Bill Black.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Mary Dozier O'Brien.

DIGEST 2018 Regular Session

Milkovich

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