

Regular Session, 2013

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 7

BY REPRESENTATIVE BADON

A RESOLUTION

To express the condolences of the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the death of Alec Gifford, a longtime news reporter anchor in the New Orleans area, and to memorialize his profound impact upon the lives of all those who watched him and received their news from him throughout his five decades in television journalism.

WHEREAS, it is with deep sorrow and much regret that the members of the Louisiana House of Representatives have learned of the death of beloved newsman Alec Gifford, at the age of eighty-five; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting to recognize and record for posterity the many achievements and significant contributions of Alec Gifford; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Gifford's father, Alexander Gifford, was a political reporter for the *Times-Picayune*, and his great-grandfather, Numa Dufour, published the French-language newspaper *L'Abeille de la Nouvelle-Orleans* in New Orleans; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Gifford was a graduate of Jesuit High School, enlisted in the United States Navy at age seventeen, and attended college at Johns Hopkins University; and

WHEREAS, after working at radio stations, Mr. Gifford joined the staff of WDSU TV, the New Orleans NBC affiliate in 1955, after being recognized by Bill Monroe, the station's first news director; and

WHEREAS, in 1966, Mr. Gifford joined the NBC News national team in New York, where he worked for one year before returning home to New Orleans as news director, anchor, and reporter at WVUE; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Gifford returned to his beloved WDSU in 1980 and continued to serve there as an anchor and news director for many years until his retirement in 2006; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Gifford built a very loyal audience through his openness, honesty, and candor; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Gifford covered the presidential campaign of then-Senator John F. Kennedy and was largely credited for introducing Senator Kennedy to New Orleans voters; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Gifford worked alongside other pioneers in the business, including Mel Leavitt and Nash Roberts, and hired many who would become local icons, such as investigative reporter Richie Angelico and anchor Norman Robinson; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Gifford retired from WDSU in December 2006 after being on the air and behind the scenes for over fifty years; and

WHEREAS, throughout his extensive career, Mr. Gifford covered all of the major news stories in Louisiana from Hurricanes Betsy and Katrina to numerous political scandals; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Gifford will be remembered by his colleagues as a wonderful teacher, a patient and loving mentor, and a gifted role model; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Gifford is survived by his wife, Dolores, sons Nathan Gifford and Russell Gifford, daughters Edie Deegan, Rena Bonin, and Elise Gifford, ten grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Gifford will be truly missed by the members and journalists of the television news business, many of whom were blessed to call him a friend, and he will always be remembered fondly for the genuine interest and regard he exhibited for those with whom he worked and for the diligent, consistent manner in which he provided invaluable news and information to the New Orleans area day after day, year after year; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Gifford has left an indelible mark on the minds and hearts of the many citizens whose lives he touched; and

WHEREAS, the death of Mr. Gifford has left a tremendous void in his community and has created a genuine sense of sorrow in the many individuals who mourn the loss of this wonderful gentleman whose memory shall forever remain alive in their minds and hearts; and

WHEREAS, the debt of the people of Louisiana to Alec Gifford is indeed great, for he touched the lives of not only those fortunate enough to have known him but of all those

who grew up watching and listening to him on television and who feel the lasting impact of his legacy.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the members of the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana do hereby express sincere and heartfelt condolences upon the death of Alec Gifford, who served as a renowned journalist in the New Orleans area for over fifty years, do hereby recognize and record for posterity his significant contributions, his outstanding abilities, and his generosity and kindness, and do hereby express the deep regret of the entire state upon the loss of this extraordinary gentleman.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the family of Mr. Alec Gifford.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES