

Regular Session, 2013

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 24

BY REPRESENTATIVE PUGH

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To recognize Tuesday, April 9, 2013, as Ponchatoula Strawberry Festival Day.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate to commend the organizers and volunteers of the Ponchatoula Strawberry Festival and to recognize Tuesday, April 9, 2013, as Ponchatoula Strawberry Festival Day; and

WHEREAS, the Ponchatoula Strawberry Festival Board was organized in 1971, and the first festival was held in April of 1972; and

WHEREAS, the first Ponchatoula Strawberry Festival was cosponsored by the Ponchatoula Jaycees and the Ponchatoula Chamber of Commerce, and both organizations provided three members to serve on the festival board; and

WHEREAS, the planning committee and many other interested volunteers worked diligently for months planning the first festival, which was located on the first block of North Sixth Street and only had eleven booths; and

WHEREAS, the first Ponchatoula Strawberry Festival was a two-day event that began with a baseball game between Southeastern Louisiana University and Wisconsin State, and later that day, the first annual parade made its way through Ponchatoula with sixty-five units from all over the state; and

WHEREAS, estimated attendance for the weekend of the first Ponchatoula Strawberry Festival was fifteen thousand; and

WHEREAS, the first royal court of the Ponchatoula Strawberry Festival consisted of Queen Sissy Dufreche, King Fred Beachamp, and Princess Sandy Smith, and the queen and her court made several appearances on television and radio stations throughout the state to publicize the festival; and

WHEREAS, during his first term in office, Governor Edwin Edwards proclaimed April as Strawberry Festival Month; and

WHEREAS, from the Ponchatoula Strawberry Festival's humble beginning, it has evolved into a Louisiana celebration second only to Mardi Gras in its magnitude; and

WHEREAS, today, the annual Ponchatoula Strawberry Festival is organized by the Ponchatoula Strawberry Festival Board, Inc., which is comprised of a chairperson, chairperson-elect, treasurer, secretary, parliamentarian, and other essential positions; and

WHEREAS, decisions of the festival board are the responsibility of the sixteen voting board members who represent various organizations, including the Ponchatoula Chamber of Commerce, the Ponchatoula Jaycees, the Ponchatoula Rotary Club, the Ponchatoula Kiwanis, the Knights of Columbus, Ponchatoula Youth Baseball, the Champ Cooper School, and the Ponchatoula Lions Club; and

WHEREAS, the Ponchatoula Strawberry Festival Board is a proud member of the Louisiana Association of Fairs and Festivals; and

WHEREAS, today, the official Ponchatoula Strawberry Festival grounds include Memorial Park and the first two blocks of North Sixth Street; and

WHEREAS, the Ponchatoula Strawberry Festival continually draws a huge crowd that strolls through America's Antique City and watches one of the biggest parades in South Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, for more than thirty years, the Ponchatoula Strawberry Festival has provided a fundraising venue as a fundraiser for nonprofit and charitable organizations, and the festival prides itself as being one of the only festivals in which nonprofit organizations are the only vendors on the official festival grounds; and

WHEREAS, the 2013 Ponchatoula Strawberry Festival is being held from April 12 through April 14, 2013, in Ponchatoula, Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, the Ponchatoula Strawberry Festival and its organizers and volunteers merit a sincere measure of commendation for their contributions to the culture and economy of the state of Louisiana.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby recognize Tuesday, April 9, 2013, as Ponchatoula Strawberry Festival Day and does hereby celebrate the Ponchatoula Strawberry Festival as an integral part of the culture and history of the city of Ponchatoula and the state of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Ponchatoula Strawberry Festival Board, Inc.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE