

Regular Session, 2013

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 103

BY REPRESENTATIVES ST. GERMAIN, BARROW, CHAMPAGNE, HILL, HODGES, KATRINA JACKSON, NANCY LANDRY, MORENO, NORTON, SMITH, STOKES, THIERRY, AND WHITNEY AND SENATORS BROOME, BUFFINGTON, DORSEY-COLOMB, GUILLORY, AND PETERSON

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To commend Chief Justice Bernette Joshua Johnson of New Orleans upon her receipt of a 2013 Women of Excellence Award from the Louisiana Legislative Women's Caucus Foundation for her achievements in the field of Louisiana Hero of Excellence.

WHEREAS, Bernette Joshua Johnson took her oath of office as Chief Justice of the Louisiana Supreme Court on February 1, 2013, having been first elected Associate Justice of the Louisiana Supreme Court in 1994 and reelected without opposition in 2000 and 2010, and having been the first woman elected to the Civil District Court in New Orleans; and

WHEREAS, Chief Justice Johnson grew up in New Orleans, attended public schools, and graduated valedictorian of her high school class; she then attended Spelman College in Atlanta on an academic scholarship, where she received a Bachelor of Arts degree, and she was one of the first African-American women to attend the Law School at Louisiana State University, where she received her Juris Doctorate degree in 1969; and

WHEREAS, prior to her election to the bench, Chief Justice Johnson spent most of her legal career working in the public sector; she served as a legal services attorney and a Deputy City Attorney for the City of New Orleans; she worked as a law intern with the United States Justice Department, Civil Rights Division, and as a community organizer with the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund in New York City; and during the 1970s, she helped to organize household workers to receive social security benefits and a minimum wage; and

WHEREAS, Chief Justice Johnson has been recognized for her many achievements; she received an Honorary Doctorate of Laws from Spelman College in 2001; her portrait was unveiled in 1996 and she was inducted into the LSU Law Center Hall of Fame; in 2010,

Justice Johnson was inducted into the National Bar Association Hall of Fame and the Louisiana Justice Hall of Fame; and Chief Justice Johnson is the recipient of numerous awards, including the American Bar Association 2010 Spirit of Excellence Award, in 2010 the Distinguished Civil Rights Advocate Award, in 2009 Louisiana State Bar Association Distinguished Jurist; and in 1998 the American Bar Association's Margaret Brent Women Lawyers of Achievement Award; she was the recipient of the first Ernest N. Morial Award given by the New Orleans Legal Assistance Corporation and the A.P. Tureaud Citizenship Award given by the Louisiana State Conference, NAACP; and former New Orleans Mayor Marc H. Morial presented her with the Medal of Honor from the City of New Orleans; and

WHEREAS, Chief Justice Johnson is a long-standing member of the National Bar Association; she has been Secretary and Chair of the National Bar Association Judicial Council and served as Chair for the Annual meeting in Memphis, Tennessee, when over one thousand two hundred lawyers, judges, and community leaders, including the entire Tennessee Supreme Court, attended the Judicial Council luncheon; and

WHEREAS, Chief Justice Johnson has two adult children, a son, David, an accountant who lives in Atlanta with his wife and children, and a daughter, Rachael, who is a lawyer, licensed in both Florida and Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Legislative Women's Caucus Foundation created the Women of Excellence Awards to recognize and honor extraordinary women of excellence across the state for their outstanding achievements and contributions; and

WHEREAS, recipients of the Women of Excellence Awards exhibit characteristics of integrity and professionalism, personify excellence in their area of specialty, and are committed to community service to better society as a whole; and

WHEREAS, for 2013, there are six fields or categories for the Women of Excellence Awards: Business, College Woman of Excellence, Education and Research, High School Woman of Excellence, Louisiana Hero of Excellence, and Military; and

WHEREAS, the recipients of the 2013 Women of Excellence Awards are being recognized at the Louisiana Legislative Women's Caucus Foundation's Women of Excellence Awards Gala on Wednesday, May 29, 2013, at the historic Hilton Capitol House Hotel in Baton Rouge; and

WHEREAS, Chief Justice Bernette Joshua Johnson of New Orleans has been named a recipient of a 2013 Women of Excellence Award in the field of Louisiana Hero of Excellence, a new field which recognizes an ordinary everyday person who is making extraordinarily positive differences in changing the lives of people in Louisiana and beyond; and

WHEREAS, Chief Justice Bernette Joshua Johnson merits a sincere and heartfelt measure of commendation for her dedication to excellence and her outstanding accomplishments, and it is entirely appropriate for the Legislature of Louisiana to commend Chief Justice Johnson upon her receipt of a 2013 Women of Excellence Award from the Louisiana Legislative Women's Caucus Foundation which recognizes her vital contributions to the citizens of Louisiana.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend Chief Justice Bernette Joshua Johnson of New Orleans upon her receipt of a 2013 Women of Excellence Award from the Louisiana Legislative Women's Caucus Foundation for her achievements in the field of Louisiana Hero of Excellence; does hereby recognize and record for posterity her singular contributions to the citizens of Louisiana, and does hereby extend enduring appreciation for the tremendous honor and pride that she brings to the state of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Chief Justice Bernette Joshua Johnson.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE