

Regular Session, 2014

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 31

BY REPRESENTATIVES KATRINA JACKSON, ANDERS, ARMES, ARNOLD, BADON, BARROW, BILLIOT, BROWN, BURRELL, CARTER, DIXON, EDWARDS, FOIL, FRANKLIN, GAINES, GISCLAIR, GUINN, HARRIS, HAZEL, HODGES, HOFFMANN, HONORE, HUNTER, JAMES, JEFFERSON, JOHNSON, JONES, KLECKLEY, TERRY LANDRY, LEBAS, MONTOUCET, MORENO, NORTON, PIERRE, PRICE, PUGH, REYNOLDS, RITCHIE, ROBIDEAUX, SCHEXNAYDER, SMITH, ST. GERMAIN, THIERRY, ALFRED WILLIAMS, PATRICK WILLIAMS, WILLMOTT, AND WOODRUFF AND SENATORS BROOME AND DORSEY-COLOMB

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To recognize the life of Nelson Mandela, former President of South Africa, civil rights leader, teacher, freedom fighter, father of his nation, and inspiration to the global community, by expressing support for the Nelson Mandela Scholars Program at Southern University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

WHEREAS, it is with profound intent the Legislature of Louisiana is moved to pay homage to a man of indomitable faith and dedication whose purposeful life and accomplishments will continue to stand as a paradigm and inspiration for others; and

WHEREAS, Nelson Mandela was a man of great character and the Legislature of Louisiana acclaims those individuals whose lives exemplify the highest ideals of humanity; and

WHEREAS, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was born on July 18, 1918, in Mvezo, South Africa, and passed away on December 5, 2013, at ninety-five years of age; and

WHEREAS, Nelson Mandela delivered his famous "I am prepared to die" statement from the dock at the opening of the Rivonia Trial, in which he declared, "I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if it needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die"; and

WHEREAS, Nelson Mandela was charged with conspiring against the government and spent twenty-seven years of his life in prison; he was sentenced to life in prison in 1964 and he, along with seven other African National Congress (ANC) members, was sent to Robben Island Prison in South Africa; and

WHEREAS, in February of 1990, President Frederik de Klerk of South Africa announced Nelson Mandela's release from prison; and

WHEREAS, soon after Nelson Mandela was freed from prison, he set out as a magnanimous leader to create the world he envisioned; he began negotiations with the South African government, which led to the gradual dismantling of apartheid from 1990 to 1993 and earned him and President Frederik de Klerk a joint Nobel Peace Prize in 1993; and

WHEREAS, Nelson Mandela was admired by his country and the world at large; he won South Africa's first multiracial elections on April 27, 1994, and became South Africa's first black president; he vowed to build a "rainbow nation at peace with itself and with the world"; and

WHEREAS, Nelson Mandela established the Truth and Reconciliation Commission with the purpose of resolving the gaping wounds left by apartheid and working toward national unity; and

WHEREAS, at the end of his term as President of South Africa in 1999, Nelson Mandela withdrew from political life, but continued to remain active in various causes, such as the fight against AIDS, which was the disease that claimed the life of his son, Makgatho, in 2005; and

WHEREAS, in 2000, the Honorable Nelson Mandela was the commencement speaker for the spring commencement at Southern University and A&M College, and the School of Public Policy and Urban Affairs was named after him in honor of his life accomplishments; and

WHEREAS, Nelson Mandela's monumental legacy will continue to shine forth as a beacon of hope for all those who aspire to create a just and peaceful world.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby remember Nelson Mandela's purposeful life and countless achievements and does hereby celebrate the life of Nelson Mandela by supporting the establishment of the Nelson Mandela Scholars Program at Southern University and A&M College in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Nelson Mandela Scholars Program at Southern University and A&M College.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE