

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 91

BY SENATORS GARY SMITH AND BROWN AND REPRESENTATIVE GREGORY MILLER

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To express the sincere condolences of the Legislature of Louisiana to the family of Felix Simoneaux Jr. upon his death as the oldest man in the United States of America at the age of 110.

WHEREAS, Felix Simoneaux Jr. was born in the town of Montz in St. Charles Parish on May 24, 1905, one of eight children of a farming family living on land that would later be expropriated by the federal government and used to build the Bonnet Carre Spillway as a flood control project; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Simoneaux cut his education short at age 13 in order to help his family on the farm and later taught himself carpentry when the carpenter on a job quit without notice and he was thrust into the position that would become his lifetime vocation; and

WHEREAS, he would ultimately become a master carpenter who built sugar towers for refineries and still later he was a member of large construction crews building luxury hotels in New Orleans; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Felix, as he was well known to many, would be promoted to the position of job foreman because of the construction skills that he constantly honed and perfected all of his long life; and

WHEREAS, he loved to dance and he would meet Myrtle Champagne at a dance in Luling in the 1930s and marry her a year later because he knew when he saw her that she was the one he wanted to spend the rest of his life with; and

WHEREAS, when World War II began, Mr. Simoneaux was eager to serve his country, but a carpentry accident had left his eyesight damaged and he was deferred from military service; but he was determined to help the war effort so he hired on with a construction company building Higgins boats used for landing American troops in both the

Atlantic and Pacific theaters of war; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Simoneaux used the discarded, scrap lumber from the Higgins boats to build a small home in LaPlace, and his thriftiness remained with him throughout his life and it showed when he bought his family's first car, a 1957 Chevy, with cash he had saved; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Felix may have been thrifty, but he was more often known as a kind man who would help a neighbor who was down on his luck and needed a helping hand to survive the hard times that existed then in LaPlace; and

WHEREAS, in 1940, he would later build a larger home at a cost of seven hundred dollars on land he bought near his first modest home, cutting his own cypress for the new home that he would live in until his death, raising chickens and a few cows, and feeding his family with vegetables such as tomatoes, turnips, carrots, mustard greens, shallots and musk melons that he grew on his farm; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Simoneaux was such a gifted gardener that when he retired from construction work at age 70, he was able to raise enough vegetables to feed his family and sell the rest at the French Market in New Orleans for extra cash as he and Myrtle raised a growing family of six children; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Felix was a religious man and attended church services at a chapel in Montz and the St. Joan of Arc Catholic Church in LaPlace for many of his 110 years of life in St. Charles Parish; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Felix would admit to a single fault and that was playing cards, and he enjoyed playing with some of his older friends in a back room at Cliff's Bar where stories of youth and the "old days" were told and laughs were shared; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Simoneaux's family was always amazed by and marveled at his keen mind and his ability to recall the events of his life, even after he had reached the age of one hundred, and when he passed away, he was the oldest man in the United States at one hundred ten years of age, one month short of his one hundred eleventh birthday; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Felix was often asked if there was a secret to the very long and healthy life he lived and he would always answer that he had lived a clean life and never smoked or drank and always chewed his food very well; and

WHEREAS, although Mr. Felix lost an infant daughter, Loretta, many years ago and lost his beloved wife, Myrtle, in 2004 after sixty-nine happy years of marriage, he was blessed that his other children still lived nearby and could visit often, including Myrtle, Maurice, Myra and Carey Simoneaux, and Audrey Terrio.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby extend its deepest and most profound condolences to the family of Felix Simoneaux Jr., for his long, well-spent life, and for his many contributions to his community, his state, and his country.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the family of Felix Simoneaux Jr.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES