

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 7

BY SENATORS JOHNS, ALARIO, ALLAIN, APPEL, BARROW, BISHOP, BOUDREAUX, BROWN, CARTER, CHABERT, CLAITOR, COLOMB, CORTEZ, DONAHUE, ERDEY, FANNIN, GATTI, HEWITT, LAFLEUR, LAMBERT, LONG, LUNEAU, MARTINY, MILKOVICH, MILLS, MIZELL, MORRELL, MORRISH, PEACOCK, PERRY, PETERSON, RISER, GARY SMITH, JOHN SMITH, TARVER, THOMPSON, WALSWORTH, WARD AND WHITE AND REPRESENTATIVES ABRAHAM, DANAHAY, DWIGHT, FRANKLIN, GUINN, HENSGENS AND HILL

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To commend James Carroll "Jim" Beam, a longtime political columnist and retired editor of the Lake Charles *American Press* upon the occasion of being named as a 2017 inductee into the Louisiana Political Museum Hall of Fame in Winnfield, Louisiana.

WHEREAS, Jim Beam was born in Cameron, Louisiana, on October 7, 1933, to Carrie and Charlie Beam and has been a longtime resident of Lake Charles; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Beam is a graduate of LaGrange High School, where he excelled academically, graduating as salutatorian of his class of 1951; and

WHEREAS, Jim Beam went on to attend McNeese State University where he earned his bachelor of arts degree in social studies in 1955 and a master of arts degree in American history in 1962; and

WHEREAS, while an undergraduate, Mr. Beam met and married JoAnn Drachenberg on August 20, 1954; and

WHEREAS, Jim Beam served in the United States Army from 1955 through his honorable discharge in 1957 and, upon returning home, he turned his considerable talents to teaching in the Calcasieu Parish school system from 1958 through 1961; and

WHEREAS, in 1961, Jim Beam joined the staff of the Lake Charles *American Press* as a part-time sports reporter and he became a full-time reporter in 1962; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Beam moved steadily up through the ranks of the newspaper to serve as city editor, beginning in 1965, co-editor in 1982, and executive editor in 1992; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Beam found the political arena especially interesting and he began to cover the Louisiana Legislature part-time in 1968, covering the people and events that took place during legislative sessions as he moved to full-time coverage of the legislature

in 1975, and he has reported on the legislature since that date; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure of watching and reporting on the people and events impacting the state politically, Jim Beam eventually turned from news reporting to editorial commentaries, writing a column addressing the events taking place in Baton Rouge and the wide-range of personalities involved in the work at the capitol, which affected citizens throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, over the years of writing his political column on the Louisiana Legislature, Mr. Beam has garnered awards from the Louisiana Press Association, the Louisiana-Mississippi Associated Press and the Louisiana State Medical Society; and

WHEREAS, Jim Beam published *Positively Beaming*, a collection of over one hundred of his favorite newspaper columns and *A Matter of Trust*; which was an excerpt of his master's thesis entitled *The Public Career of Arsene P. Pujo, Louisiana Congressman, 1903 through 1913*; and

WHEREAS, in 2000, Jim Beam was selected by the Advertising and Press Club to be the first "Lake Area Legend" and in 2010 he was awarded the Hector San Miguel Memorial Award for Outstanding Achievement in Journalism, an award named for a previous editor of the *American Press*; and

WHEREAS, although Mr. Beam retired from the position of editor of the *American Press*, in 1990, he continued to cover events at the legislature and to write editorials for the newspaper; and

WHEREAS, after more than fifty years in journalism and much of that covering and commenting on the activities and decisions of the Louisiana Legislature, Mr. Beam brought his unique perspective to report about an institution that was shaped by a new constitution in 1974 and by a shift to a bipartisan political system in the new century; and

WHEREAS, Jim Beam saw first-hand these and other events which altered the functioning of the Louisiana Legislature and changed Louisiana's political landscape; and

WHEREAS, throughout Jim Beam's tenure as a political reporter and columnist, he took seriously what he saw as his responsibility to fairly inform and to bring to the public reasoned viewpoints which he considered to be essential to the functioning of a democratic society, particularly, the people of Lake Charles and the entirety of Southwest Louisiana.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend Jim Beam, a longtime political columnist and retired editor of the Lake Charles *American Press*, upon the occasion of being named as a 2017 inductee into the Louisiana Political Museum Hall of Fame.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Jim Beam in care of the Lake Charles *American Press*.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES