

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 3

BY SENATOR PEACOCK

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To express the heartfelt condolences of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the passing of Shreveport philanthropist and art advocate, Ollie Delton Harrison Jr. and to celebrate his life and his legacy of good works and community service.

WHEREAS, art patron Delton Harrison was a true southern gentleman and a vibrant individual; he possessed a rapier wit and a keen sense of civic duty in the promotion of all manner of artistic pursuits that enriched the public as a whole; and

WHEREAS, Delton Harrison was a Renaissance man of exquisite cultural tastes and refinement; he had mastered an infinite number of vocations during his lifetime as philanthropist, world traveler, civic leader, fundraiser, champion of the creative spirit, and a supporter of cultural opportunities for all; and

WHEREAS, born in Shreveport on May 22, 1931, into the family of Ollie Delton Harrison Sr. and Jennie Moore Lane; he was an exceptional scholar and a graduate of C. E. Byrd High School, Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, and American University in Washington, D.C.; and

WHEREAS, during the 1950s, he returned to Shreveport to enter the family business at Harrison Company, a successful confection and tobacco product wholesaler; and

WHEREAS, Delton Harrison created art venues whenever possible and founded many local institutions such as the Shreveport Art Guild, Friends of the Meadows Museum, Red River Revel Arts Festival, and Les Boutiques de Noel; and

WHEREAS, he served in the capacity of officer and member of an extensive list of civic organizations that included the Shreveport Regional Arts Council, the Shreveport Little Theatre, the Shreveport Symphony, and the Shreveport Opera company where he sang in the chorus for many years; and

WHEREAS, his philanthropy was boundless and the extent of his personal giving may never be fully known because much of it was done anonymously although he received numerous awards and honors throughout his lifetime for his philanthropy; and

WHEREAS, some of his recognitions include the Clyde Fant Award from the United Way, Arts Patron of the Year (2000), Outstanding Philanthropist of the Year by the North Louisiana Chapter of the National Society of Fundraising Executives, and being named a Louisiana Legend by Friends of Louisiana Public Broadcasting (2013); and

WHEREAS, he promoted higher education and better medical health outcomes with service on the advisory boards of Centenary College, Louisiana State University Shreveport, LSU Health Sciences Center Shreveport, Feist-Weiller Cancer Center, and the CHRISTUS Schumpert Foundation; he also established an endowed chair for the Master of Liberal Arts Program at LSUS; and he was named an Honorary Alumnus of Centenary College; and

WHEREAS, Delton Harrison had a very special place in his heart for the historic preservation of Shreveport landmarks such as the Robinson Film Center, Oakland Cemetery (Preservation Society), and The Strand Theatre; and many local nonprofit agencies benefitted from his guidance and prolific fundraising capabilities; and

WHEREAS, he was the lifetime chairman of the Shreveport Branch of the English-Speaking Union and under his tutelage the organization flourished as the largest chapter in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the scope of his interests extended far beyond the state of Louisiana; in New York City, Delton served on the boards of the Metropolitan Opera, the National Institute for American Musical Theater, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art; he held a fifty-year membership in the Metropolitan Club; and the American Museum in Bath, England, and the Royal Academy of Arts in London were also beneficiaries of his generosity and vision; and

WHEREAS, perhaps Delton Harrison's most profound characteristic was his innate ability to embrace the universal appeal of music; while serving on the boards of the Dallas Opera Association and the Dallas Grand Opera, he often orchestrated group trips to attend Sunday performances and enriched the experience with the opportunity to perhaps meet such operatic greats of the era, that included soprano Beverly Sills and tenor Placido Domingo; and

WHEREAS, Delton was a longtime member of The Shreveport Club and was awarded its Founders Cup (2009); he was also an active member of the Cotillion Club and

reigned as Rex VI; and

WHEREAS, as a man of unfaltering faith, Delton attended St. Mark's Episcopal Church and served as a choir member and usher; and

WHEREAS, he was beloved by family and copious numbers of friends throughout the world and was famous for hosting festive occasions in his home, which were always filled with beautiful art, savory cuisine, and lively conversation; and

WHEREAS, he is survived by his sister Adelaide (Shelby Smith); his nieces and nephews, Harrison Smith (Cissie), Jennie Lane Easterwood of Shreveport and Shelby Smith Jr. of Santa Fe, New Mexico; his great-nieces and great-nephews, Delton Smith (Caroline) of Shreveport, Randolph Smith of Shreveport, Edward Smith of Shreveport, Shelby Easterwood of Shreveport, and Mary Katherine Easterwood of Shreveport and a host of extended family and many close friends; and

WHEREAS, Delton Harrison was an altruist of the highest order who has left an indelible mark on the rich cultural atmosphere of Shreveport and the Ark-La-Tex region; he readily performed his civic duty whenever and wherever possible and his support of artistic opportunity for the community has been an immeasurable gift to all of Northwestern Louisiana.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express condolences to the family and friends of the late Ollie Delton Harrison Jr., art patron, civic leader, and philanthropist, and does hereby recognize that his life was well-spent in service of his community, his family, and his God.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to his sister, Mrs. Adelaide Smith.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES