HLS 22RS-1506 ORIGINAL

2022 Regular Session

1

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 59

BY REPRESENTATIVES FIRMENT AND RISER AND SENATOR WOMACK

CONDOLENCES: Expresses condolences on the death of Sammy Jones Franklin

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2	To express the condolences of the Legislature on the death of Sammy Jones Franklin.
3	WHEREAS, it is with deep regret and profound sorrow that the Legislature of
4	Louisiana has learned of the passing of a great gentleman and family patriarch, Sammy
5	Jones Franklin, in Jena, Louisiana, on January 28, 2022, at the age of eighty-one years; and
6	WHEREAS, Sammy J. Franklin was born on May 24, 1940, in Jigger, Louisiana, to
7	Charlie Franklin and Alice Wall Franklin; and
8	WHEREAS, for fifty-four years, he was the owner, publisher, and editor of <i>The Jena</i>
9	Times Olla-Tullos-Urania Signal, the official journal for LaSalle Parish, a job that he loved
0	as much as life itself; and
1	WHEREAS, Sammy embarked at a young age on what would become his lifelong
12	passion, starting as a paper boy in Caldwell Parish, and joining the staff of <i>The Caldwell</i>
13	Watchman by the time he was enrolled at Columbia High School; and
14	WHEREAS, upon graduating in 1958, he worked full-time as a reporter and
15	photographer, honing his craft over the next ten years, and igniting inside himself the dream
16	to one day own his own newspaper; and
17	WHEREAS, that dream was realized on January 1, 1968, when Sammy officially
18	took over the operation of two newspapers, The Jena Times and the Olla-Tullos Signal,
19	which would be combined within a year as The Jena Times Olla-Tullos-Signal; and
20	WHEREAS, in the succeeding years, he continued to improve the newspaper's
21	quality, adding full color pictures and eventually updating for the digital age; and

1	WHEREAS, while many small-town weekly newspapers closed or drastically
2	reduced their sizes over the past half-century, The Jena Times continued to grow under
3	Sammy's stalwart leadership; and
4	WHEREAS, in keeping with Sammy's belief that in order to have a successful
5	newspaper, the publisher and editor must become a part of the community that the paper
6	serves, he was actively involved in many church and civic clubs and organizations; and
7	WHEREAS, he helped organize the Jena Jaycees, which held the first Howdy
8	Neighbor Day; was an active member of the Jena Kiwanis Club; served a term on the Jena
9	Town Council, and as chairman of various committees and boards, including the LaSalle
10	Parish Library and LaSalle Parish Ambulance Board; spearheaded many other community
11	initiatives, including the first-ever Jena Nighttime Christmas Parade, first-ever outdoor Jena
12	High School graduation ceremony, and Jena Dixie Youth Baseball; and was instrumental in
13	various businesses deciding to locate in LaSalle Parish; and
14	WHEREAS, Sammy consistently promoted academics and athletics both in his
15	newspaper and as an avid fan, with his generous donations and involvement still positively
16	affecting young peoples' lives today; and
17	WHEREAS, his life revolved around his Savior, Jesus Christ, his family, his
18	newspaper, and doing everything he could for the betterment of LaSalle Parish; and
19	WHEREAS, Sammy was a long-time member of Temple Baptist Church, then
20	Midway Baptist Church, and served in various roles, including deacon, music minister, and
21	treasurer; and
22	WHEREAS, he loved old-time, four-part harmony Gospel music; at one time lending
23	his talents to a Gospel music group that sang in the area; and
24	WHEREAS, Sammy was a great fan of George Jones and loved to play his music and
25	sing to family and employees of his newspaper, brightening the day of all who were gifted
26	with his performance; and
27	WHEREAS, he was an extraordinary husband, father, grandfather, and friend, who
28	is survived by his loving wife of forty-one years, Bonita Francis Franklin; daughters, Penny
29	Justus and Ashley Keene, and her husband Dustin; four sons, Glen Franklin, Craig Franklin,
30	and his wife Kim, Scott Franklin, and his wife Jamie, and Charlie Franklin, and his wife

Marissa; eighteen grandchildren; fourteen great-grandchildren; numerous nieces and 1 2 nephews; and a host of other family and friends; and 3 WHEREAS, the memory of Sammy J. Franklin will always remain in the hearts of 4 his family and friends who will forever reap the benefits of his lifetime of achievement; and 5 WHEREAS, Sammy represented all that is good about Louisiana as a man with 6 unique gifts and a charitable spirit, and with his passing, this state has lost one of its finest 7 citizens who left an indelible mark on the lives of the many individuals whom he touched 8 with his truly inspiring qualities and generosity, and he is now terribly missed but will never 9 be forgotten. 10 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby 11 extend its sincere and heartfelt condolences to the family of Sammy J. Franklin upon the 12 occasion of his death, does hereby express its appreciation for Sammy J. Franklin's enduring 13 contributions, which shall long continue to be a source of deep honor for the town of Jena, 14 LaSalle Parish, and the state of Louisiana, and does hereby pay tribute to his remarkable 15 legacy, which shall live long in the hearts of those who were touched by his humanity. 16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the

## DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HCR 59 Original

family of Sammy J. Franklin.

17

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Firment

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