

2022 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 118

BY REPRESENTATIVE SELDERS

COMMENDATIONS: Commends the Louisiana Art & Science Museum on the occasion of its sixtieth anniversary

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To commend the Louisiana Art & Science Museum on the occasion of its sixtieth
3 anniversary.

4 WHEREAS, on July 24, 1962, the Louisiana Art & Science Museum was granted its
5 501(c)3 nonprofit status to enhance the understanding and appreciation of art and science
6 for general audiences and students by presenting unique, educational, and entertaining
7 experiences that encourage discovery, inspire creativity, and foster the pursuit of knowledge;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, in 1988, the city-parish government purchased the old Yazoo &
10 Mississippi Valley Passenger Railway Station from the Illinois Central Railroad for
11 \$100,000 and leased the building to the Louisiana Art & Science Museum for a term of
12 ninety-nine years through 2087; in 1998, the old train depot was placed on the National
13 Register of Historic Places; and

14 WHEREAS, in 1998, the Louisiana Art & Science Museum entered into an
15 agreement with both the state of Louisiana and the city of Baton Rouge for a \$16.8 million
16 project to build a planetarium, atrium, education rooms, and galleries at the south end of the
17 building; in 1999, the Irene W. and C.B. Pennington Foundation funded an endowment for
18 the operations of the planetarium; and

19 WHEREAS, on May 22, 2003, the Louisiana Art & Science Museum opened the
20 Irene W. Pennington Planetarium and ExxonMobil Space Theater; the planetarium, with its
21 sixty-foot dome and seating for one hundred seventy-one spectators, is one of the largest and

1 most technologically advanced planetariums in the southeastern United States; since its
2 inception in 2003, the Irene W. Pennington Planetarium has welcomed over one million
3 visitors; and

4 WHEREAS, in 2019, the Louisiana Art & Science Museum welcomed over one
5 hundred seventy-five thousand program participants; of these participants, one hundred five
6 thousand were K-12 students from more than forty parishes in Louisiana and five counties
7 in Mississippi; additionally, 18% of these participants were tourists; and

8 WHEREAS, in 2020, the Louisiana Art & Science Museum survived the shutdowns
9 encountered by nearly one-third of the nation's museums as a result of the COVID-19
10 pandemic; the pandemic resulted in a significant reduction in the museum's earnings,
11 staffing, and visitation; during the tumultuous year, the museum remained open to the public
12 as mandates allowed and created a free-access, virtual museum and digital learning platform
13 to engage isolated individuals and quarantined audiences, including those in healthcare and
14 hospice facilities; in total, over forty thousand individuals were provided virtual and onsite
15 programs in 2020; and

16 WHEREAS, the Louisiana Art & Science Museum and Irene W. Pennington
17 Planetarium remains accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, a standard held by
18 only 6% of museums nationwide; it houses over four thousand works of art, including
19 Louisiana modern and contemporary art, American art, European art, and scientific objects
20 and antiques that include an authentic mummy housed in one of the only permanent ancient
21 Egypt galleries in the southeastern United States; and

22 WHEREAS, in 2021, the Louisiana Art & Science Museum secured over \$500,000
23 in relief funding; as a "Blue Star" museum, it offers free admission to veterans, active
24 military members, first responders, and the families of these individuals; and

25 WHEREAS, the Louisiana Art & Science Museum, in partnership with local
26 corporations, provided over three thousand high-needs students with STEAM-based virtual
27 education programs to introduce them to concepts and careers in STEAM-based
28 occupations; and

29 WHEREAS, this year, the Louisiana Art & Science Museum celebrates the sixtieth
30 anniversary of its status as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization; this momentous occasion will

1 be marked with a collections catalog and a fundraising Gala titled "Diamonds of History",
2 which will feature the piece *Mighty Women* by Ashley Longshore; the event will also mark
3 the beginning of extensive renovations to the museum's state-of-the-art, hands-on children's
4 galleries after two years of delays brought on by the pandemic; and

5 WHEREAS, the Louisiana Art & Science Museum has a full calendar ahead of it for
6 the next three years; in 2023, it will celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the Irene C.
7 Pennington Planetarium; in 2024, the museum will celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of its
8 acquisition of the only authentic mummy in the state of Louisiana; and in 2025, it will
9 celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of its historically significant building; and

10 WHEREAS, the Louisiana Art & Science Museum is a true treasure to both the city
11 of Baton Rouge and the state of Louisiana; it is most deserving of the highest recognition
12 for its fortitude during the pandemic and on the occasion of its sixtieth anniversary.

13 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
14 commend the Louisiana Art & Science Museum on the occasion of its sixtieth anniversary;
15 does hereby further recognize the museum for educating our region's youth in both art and
16 science in order to reduce drop-out rates and increase workforce development in STEAM-
17 based careers; and does hereby extend sincere support for the Louisiana Art & Science
18 Museum, including the Irene W. Pennington Planetarium, for its commitment to the service
19 of the general public, students, and tourists and thereby enhancing the state's educational,
20 cultural, and economic development.

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be sent to the president
22 and executive director of the Louisiana Art & Science Museum.

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 118 Original

2022 Regular Session

Selders

Commends the La. Art & Science Museum on the occasion of its 60th anniversary.