

2024 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 111

BY REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS

COMMENDATIONS: Commends Molly Buchmann and Sharon Mathews on the occasion of their retirement as artistic directors of Baton Rouge Ballet Theatre

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To commend Molly Buchmann and Sharon Mathews on the occasion of their retirement as
3 artistic directors of Baton Rouge Ballet Theatre.

4 WHEREAS, Molly Buchmann and Sharon Mathews have led the nonprofit Baton
5 Rouge Ballet Theatre (BRBT) since 1976 when founder Elissa Fuchs awarded the shared
6 honor and responsibility during a curtain call on the LSU Union Theatre stage; and

7 WHEREAS, Molly and Sharon have since created numerous notable works, trained
8 thousands of dancers, brought world-renowned guest artists to Louisiana, and earned
9 incredible honors including the Governor's Award for Outstanding Large Arts Organization
10 in 2004, the Mayor-President's Award for Excellence in the Arts in 1999, and the John W.
11 Barton, Sr. Excellence in Nonprofit Management Award in 2007; and

12 WHEREAS, Buchmann and Mathews created the nationally-acclaimed holiday
13 classic *The Nutcracker – A Tale from the Bayou*; the innovative production retells the classic
14 story through the eyes of a young girl from the Louisiana bayou; and

15 WHEREAS, Buchmann and Mathews created a partnership with the Baton Rouge
16 Symphony Orchestra to offer live music from the original Tchaikovsky score for this annual
17 production, which features a stunning bayou scene, an elaborate Louisiana mansion, a snowy
18 oak alley, a castle based on the Louisiana Old State Capitol, and world-renowned guest
19 dancers performing with BRBT's company and hundreds of Louisiana children; the unique
20 Louisiana spin on the popular ballet celebrated its thirtieth anniversary of performances in

1 December 2023 while entertaining nearly six thousand patrons in the Baton Rouge River
2 Center Theatre; and

3 WHEREAS, under the direction of Buchmann and Mathews, the Baton Rouge Ballet
4 Theatre has commissioned works by Martha Graham, including *Panorama*, which used
5 thirty dancers from across the Baton Rouge area performing with the Martha Graham Dance
6 Ensemble; and

7 WHEREAS, community outreach has been a major focus of the Baton Rouge Ballet
8 Theatre during the tenure of Buchmann and Mathews; outreach programs include Youth
9 Ballet, a summer tour program that offers free performances at libraries, community centers,
10 hospitals, and nursing homes; school-day matinees; Clara's Closet Nutcracker Scholarships;
11 Ballet Experience, which provides free performance tickets to children and other nonprofits;
12 and Ballet for Every Body, which cultivates new dance enthusiasts with its message of
13 inclusivity; and

14 WHEREAS, Ms. Buchmann is the co-owner of The Dancers' Workshop and former
15 head of dance for the Louisiana State University Department of Theatre, where she
16 developed the current dance minor program; she has choreographed more than sixty
17 musicals for professional, community, and university theatres as well as ballet and modern
18 works for the Baton Rouge Ballet Theatre; she holds a master's degree in dance and is an
19 American Ballet Theatre certified teacher; and

20 WHEREAS, Ms. Mathews is also co-owner of The Dancers' Workshop; from 1976
21 until 2014, she served as director of dance for Baton Rouge Magnet High School, and she
22 holds a bachelor of science in education and a master of science in dance from Louisiana
23 State University; she has been recognized as the Outstanding Dance Educator by the
24 Louisiana Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, and she is a
25 member of numerous civic boards and committees; and

26 WHEREAS, Molly Buchmann and Sharon Mathews are both worthy of the highest
27 recognition for their incredible careers.

28 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
29 commend Molly Buchmann and Sharon Mathews on the occasion of their retirement after
30 forty-eight years as artistic directors of Baton Rouge Ballet Theatre and does hereby extend

- 1 sincerest wishes that they both prosper in all of their endeavors as they begin a new journey
 - 2 in retirement.
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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 111 Original

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