

1 A RESOLUTION adjourning the Senate in honor and loving memory of Albert
2 Perrine "Al" Smith Jr.

3 WHEREAS, this body pauses on this day to honor a titan of Kentucky journalism,
4 Albert Perrine "Al" Smith Jr.

5 WHEREAS, at 15 years of age, Al Smith beat out 100,000 contestants to win the
6 American Legion's national oratorical contest. He joined the United States Army during
7 World War II, and attended Vanderbilt University before beginning his long and
8 extraordinary career in journalism; and

9 WHEREAS, Al Smith served as an editor for the New Orleans *Times-Picayune* and
10 the *States-Item* before relocating to Russellville, Kentucky, to become the editor of the
11 *News-Democrat*; and

12 WHEREAS, it was in this Commonwealth that Al Smith's legacy as one of this
13 country's most venerable political reporters was formed; and

14 WHEREAS, Al Smith was host and producer of Kentucky Educational Television's
15 *Comment on Kentucky*, the longest-running public affairs program on a PBS station. The
16 program, which featured a panel of Kentucky journalists discussing and analyzing the
17 week's news, was an instrumental part of the political discourse in this Commonwealth
18 for more than three decades; and

19 WHEREAS, Al Smith was the founding chair of the Kentucky Oral History
20 Commission and chair of Leadership Kentucky and the Shakertown Roundtable. He was
21 the founder of the Institute for Rural Journalism and Community Issues, an organization
22 that gave rural journalists an avenue to define the public agenda in their communities; and

23 WHEREAS, Al Smith was a charter member of the Kentucky Journalism Hall of
24 Fame, a fellow of the National Society of Professional Journalists, the former president of
25 the Kentucky Press Association, and the former chairman of the Kentucky Arts
26 Commission. He was named a Distinguished Rural Kentuckian by the Kentucky
27 Association of Electric Cooperatives and a Rural Hero by the National Rural Assembly.

1 He was the recipient of the Medallion for Intellectual Achievement from the University of
2 Kentucky Library Associates, the Kentucky Broadcasters Association's Gabbard
3 Distinguished Kentuckian Award, Leadership Kentucky's Flame of Excellence Award,
4 and several other commendations and awards; and

5 WHEREAS, a Kentuckian of the first order; a journalist who exemplified the very
6 best of his profession; and a cherished husband, father, grandfather, and brother, Al Smith
7 passed away peacefully at his home on March 19, 2021, and this august body pauses on
8 this day in rightful appreciation of his accomplishments; and

9 WHEREAS, Al Smith was preceded in death by his parents, Albert Perrine Smith
10 and Elvira Mace Smith. He is survived by his wife of almost 54 years, Martha Helen
11 Smith; children, Catherine McCarty (William), Lewis Carter Hancock, and Virginia
12 Major (William); "adopted" son, Huaming Gu; sister, Robin Burrow (James); nieces,
13 Robin Rutledge Sloane (Robert) and Rachel Burrow; and grandchildren, Evan McCarty,
14 Connor (Ikue) McCarty, Lauren Hancock, Susannah Major, and Ava Major;

15 NOW, THEREFORE,

16 *Be it resolved by the Senate of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of*
17 *Kentucky:*

18 ➔Section 1. The members of the Senate, individually and collectively, hereby
19 express their most profound sympathy upon the passing of Albert Perrine "Al" Smith Jr.,
20 and posthumously thank him for his many contributions to journalism in this
21 Commonwealth.

22 ➔Section 2. When the Senate adjourns this day, it does so in honor and loving
23 memory of Albert Perrine "Al" Smith Jr.

24 ➔Section 3. The Clerk of the Senate is directed to transmit a copy of this
25 Resolution to Senator Reginald Thomas for delivery.