

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 15

BY SENATORS JOHNS, MORRISH AND JOHN SMITH AND REPRESENTATIVES
ABRAHAM, DANAHAY, DWIGHT, FRANKLIN, GUINN AND HILL

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To commend Firestone Polymers, LLC upon seventy-five years as a maker of synthetic rubber, an endeavor that began in support of the United States war effort in World War II.

WHEREAS, the Firestone Polymers, LLC plant, now located on Highway 108 in Sulphur, Louisiana, was originally built by the United States government in 1943 to produce synthetic rubber in support of the national defense effort during World War II; and

WHEREAS, by the middle of 1942, the Axis powers of Germany, Italy, and Japan controlled nearly all the world's limited supply of natural rubber located mainly in Southeast Asia, necessitating the move to synthetic rubber; and

WHEREAS, rubber was needed for military electrical wiring, tires on trucks and jeeps, Sherman tanks, and nearly every war machine; the United States government brought together a consortium of companies to improve synthetic rubber and to produce the necessary amounts of synthetic rubber; and

WHEREAS, the efforts of the government and numerous chemists yielded a superior synthetic rubber, designated GRS for Government Rubber Styrene, and plants were built around the country to produce this essential commodity, including the plant in Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, among the items manufactured with this synthetic rubber were specialty tires for combat units which were produced using the synthetic rubber made by Firestone Tire and Rubber at the Louisiana plant; and

WHEREAS, in 1955, Firestone Tire and Rubber bought the Firestone Polymers facility from the government and continued to produce synthetic rubber for a variety of products, but, primarily for tires; and

WHEREAS, in 1988, Bridgestone Corporation purchased Firestone Tire and Rubber, including the Louisiana polymers plant; and

WHEREAS, today the Firestone Polymers site has nearly three hundred employees and produces over one million pounds of synthetic rubber per day; and

WHEREAS, the synthetic rubber produced at Firestone Polymers is used by global customers to produce Bridgestone and Firestone tires, Bridgestone golf balls, and a variety of rubber products; and

WHEREAS, Firestone Polymers, LLC is a vital contributor to the economic life of the Lake Charles-Sulphur area and is a corporate citizen greatly valued by the people of Southwest Louisiana.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend Firestone Polymers, LLC upon seventy-five years as a maker of synthetic rubber, an endeavor that began in support of the United States war effort in World War II.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Gene Lavengco, Chief Executive Officer and President of Firestone Polymers, LLC and Kenneth Babcock, plant manager at the Louisiana facility.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES