

2017 First Extraordinary Session

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 7

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

COMMENDATIONS. Commends Jim Beam on his induction into the Louisiana Political Hall of Fame.

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To commend James Carroll "Jim" Beam, a longtime political columnist and retired editor
3 of the Lake Charles *American Press* upon the occasion of being named as a 2017
4 inductee into the Louisiana Political Museum Hall of Fame in Winnfield, Louisiana.

5 WHEREAS, Jim Beam was born in Cameron, Louisiana, on October 7, 1933, to
6 Carrie and Charlie Beam and has been a longtime resident of Lake Charles; and

7 WHEREAS, Mr. Beam is a graduate of LaGrange High School, where he excelled
8 academically, graduating as salutatorian of his class of 1951; and

9 WHEREAS, Jim Beam went on to attend McNeese State University where he earned
10 his bachelor of arts degree in social studies in 1955 and a master of arts degree in American
11 history in 1962; and

12 WHEREAS, while an undergraduate, Mr. Beam met and married JoAnn Drachenberg
13 on August 20, 1954; and

14 WHEREAS, Jim Beam served in the United States Army from 1955 through his
15 honorable discharge in 1957 and, upon returning home, he turned his considerable talents
16 to teaching in the Calcasieu Parish school system from 1958 through 1961; and

17 WHEREAS, in 1961, Jim Beam joined the staff of the Lake Charles *American Press*
18 as a part-time sports reporter and he became a full-time reporter in 1962; and

1 WHEREAS, Mr. Beam moved steadily up through the ranks of the newspaper to
2 serve as city editor, beginning in 1965, co-editor in 1982, and executive editor in 1992; and

3 WHEREAS, Mr. Beam found the political arena especially interesting and he began
4 to cover the Louisiana Legislature part-time in 1968, covering the people and events that
5 took place during legislative sessions as he moved to full-time coverage of the legislature
6 in 1975, and he has reported on the legislature since that date; and

7 WHEREAS, during his tenure of watching and reporting on the people and events
8 impacting the state politically, Jim Beam eventually turned from news reporting to editorial
9 commentaries, writing a column addressing the events taking place in Baton Rouge and the
10 wide-range of personalities involved in the work at the capitol, which affected citizens
11 throughout the state; and

12 WHEREAS, over the years of writing his political column on the Louisiana
13 Legislature, Mr. Beam has garnered awards from the Louisiana Press Association, the
14 Louisiana-Mississippi Associated Press and the Louisiana State Medical Society; and

15 WHEREAS, Jim Beam published *Positively Beaming*, a collection of over one
16 hundred of his favorite newspaper columns and *A Matter of Trust*; which was an excerpt of
17 his master's thesis entitled *The Public Career of Arsene P. Pujoe, Louisiana Congressman,*
18 *1903 through 1913*; and

19 WHEREAS, in 2000, Jim Beam was selected by the Advertising and Press Club to
20 be the first "Lake Area Legend" and in 2010 he was awarded the Hector San Miguel
21 Memorial Award for Outstanding Achievement in Journalism, an award named for a
22 previous editor of the *American Press*; and

23 WHEREAS, although Mr. Beam retired from the position of editor of the *American*
24 *Press*, in 1990, he continued to cover events at the legislature and to write editorials for the
25 newspaper; and

26 WHEREAS, after more than fifty years in journalism and much of that covering and
27 commenting on the activities and decisions of the Louisiana Legislature, Mr. Beam brought
28 his unique perspective to report about an institution that was shaped by a new constitution
29 in 1974 and by a shift to a bipartisan political system in the new century; and

30 WHEREAS, Jim Beam saw first-hand these and other events which altered the

1 functioning of the Louisiana Legislature and changed Louisiana's political landscape; and

2 WHEREAS, throughout Jim Beam's tenure as a political reporter and columnist, he
3 took seriously what he saw as his responsibility to fairly inform and to bring to the public
4 reasoned viewpoints which he considered to be essential to the functioning of a democratic
5 society, particularly, the people of Lake Charles and the entirety of Southwest Louisiana.

6 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
7 commend Jim Beam, a longtime political columnist and retired editor of the Lake Charles
8 *American Press*, upon the occasion of being named as a 2017 inductee into the Louisiana
9 Political Museum Hall of Fame.

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Jim
11 Beam in care of the Lake Charles *American Press*.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Mary Dozier O'Brien.

DIGEST

SCR 7 Original

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Johns

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