

No. R-254. House concurrent resolution in memory of extraordinary Vermont pianist and cultural treasure John Cassel of East Fairfield.

(H.C.R.190)

Offered by: Representative Connor of Fairfield

Whereas, John Cassel was a vibrant member of Vermont's musical community, whose keyboard versatility was legendary, and

Whereas, music critics beyond Vermont recognized his talent, and

Whereas, the *Montreal Star* described John Cassel's approach to piano playing and vocal improvisation as "original and imaginative," *Downbeat Magazine* wrote that he was "a real find as a pianist," and the *Boston Globe* praised him as "a versatile, laid-back exponent of the jazz piano," and

Whereas, the scope of his repertoire was reflected in the diversity of composers whose works he performed, ranging from musical theater's Cole Porter to jazz impresarios Duke Ellington and Fats Waller and classical music luminary Frédéric Chopin, and

Whereas, John Cassel performed internationally with colleagues as prominent as Chick Corea and Dave Brubeck, but his personal preference was playing in small clubs, and

Whereas, his presence in East Fairfield proved a gravitating attraction to many persons in the early 1970s, and

Whereas, one close friend described John Cassel as a person with "a giant, positive, exuberant spirit," and

Whereas, perhaps John Cassel's favorite venue was the Trapp Family Lodge in Stowe, where he performed for over 30 years, and

Whereas, proprietor Sam Von Trapp described the musician as a person who "touched countless lives with his music, his energy, and his generous spirit," and

Whereas, at the time of his death in September 2014, John Cassel left a void in the Vermont music scene, and

Whereas, John Cassel's many acquaintances will remember fondly his musical talents and wonderful friendship, and

Whereas, the person who will most especially miss John Cassel is his wife, Becky, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly expresses its sincere condolences to the family and friends of extraordinary Vermont pianist and cultural treasure John Cassel, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to John Cassel's wife, Becky.