

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 19

BY SENATOR FOIL

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To commend the Louisiana Art and Science Museum/Irene W. Pennington Planetarium on its centennial celebration to mark the 100th anniversary of the historic Yazoo and Mississippi Valley Passenger Railway Station.

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Art & Science Museum (LASM), a celebrated cultural and educational institution, is housed in the historic Yazoo and Mississippi Valley Passenger Railway Station, which was originally constructed in 1925; and

WHEREAS, this iconic train depot, now a cornerstone of Baton Rouge's cultural landscape, has stood for one hundred years as a symbol of the region's rich history, built in the classical revival style; and

WHEREAS, in 1971, the depot was leased to the city of Baton Rouge with the stipulation that it be used by LASM and new life was brought to the building as LASM made its home a hub for art, science, and education; and

WHEREAS, in 1988, the city-parish government purchased the old railway station from the Illinois Central Railroad for \$100,000 and subsequently leased it to the LASM for a 99-year term, ensuring that this historic structure would be preserved and re-purposed to serve the public good; and

WHEREAS, the historic train depot was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1998, recognizing its importance in the region's history and its continued role in the cultural development of Baton Rouge; and

WHEREAS, over the years, the LASM has offered countless exhibits, programs, and educational opportunities to the public, with a mission to inspire creativity, foster discovery, and engage the community in the wonders of art and science; and

WHEREAS, the museum's relocation to the historic depot has preserved the building's legacy, while enhancing its cultural significance by housing exhibits, such as the Irene W. Pennington Planetarium, and providing an inspiring space for educational programs and cultural events; and

WHEREAS, the LASM has continued to serve as a cultural beacon for over 60,000 visitors annually, providing programs and exhibits that educate and inspire students and tourists alike; and

WHEREAS, today, the LASM and Irene W. Pennington Planetarium remains open and accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, a standard held by only six percent of museums nationwide and houses over 4,000 objects of art, including Louisiana modern and contemporary art, American, and European art, and scientific objects and antiques including an authentic mummy housed in one of the only permanent ancient Egypt galleries in the southeastern United States; and

WHEREAS, today, the LASM continues to be a leading institution in Baton Rouge and Louisiana, promoting arts, science, and education, and enhancing the community's cultural, educational, and economic development.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend the Louisiana Art & Science Museum on the 100th anniversary of the historic train depot in which it is housed and recognizes the invaluable role that the museum, in conjunction with the Irene W. Pennington Planetarium, continues to play in the cultural and educational life of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby celebrate the enduring legacy of the Yazoo and Mississippi Valley Passenger Railway Station and its transformation into the Louisiana Art & Science Museum, ensuring that this historic site continues to inspire generations to come.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Karen M. Soniat, PhD, President and Executive Director of the Louisiana Art & Science Museum.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES