

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 152

BY SENATOR BOUDREAUX

A RESOLUTION

To recognize and commend the village of Cankton, Louisiana, for its rich cultural heritage and outstanding contributions to Cajun music, and to designate the village of Cankton as the "Accordion Capital of Louisiana".

WHEREAS, the village of Cankton, located in St. Landry Parish, is a vibrant community with deep roots in Louisiana's treasured Cajun musical tradition; and

WHEREAS, Cankton has produced and nurtured numerous exceptional accordionists who have carried the spirit of Cajun music across the globe and passed it down through generations; and

WHEREAS, among the most distinguished accordionists with ties to Cankton is Sheryl Cormier, known nationally and internationally as the "Queen of Cajun Music"; and

WHEREAS, Sheryl Cormier began playing the accordion at the age of seven and became the first professional female Cajun accordionist, blazing a trail for women in Cajun music and earning such honors as Female Vocalist of the Year in 1988 by *The Times of Acadiana* and Best Contemporary Artist, Best Song and Best Upcoming Band by the Cajun French Music Association, a Grammy nomination in 1993, membership in the Cajun Music Hall of Fame in 1997, and a Living Legend Award in 2002 by the Acadian Museum; and

WHEREAS, Cormier's band "The Cajun Sound", which includes her husband and son, has performed extensively in the United States and Europe and has released over 45 recordings; and

WHEREAS, Belton Richard, another artist with ties to the village, was an acclaimed Cajun accordionist and vocalist whose baritone voice and songwriting talents made him a beloved figure in Cajun music; and

WHEREAS, Richard, founder of "The Musical Aces", was inducted into the Cajun French Music Association's Hall of Fame in 1997, recognized as a "Living Legend" by the Acadian Museum in 2003, and named Male Vocalist of the Year in 2004 by the Cajun French Music Association; and

WHEREAS, Leland Colligan, also with ties to Cankton, began handcrafting accordions in 1983 under the brand "Acadiana Triple Hearts" and became known for both his musicianship and his craftsmanship, creating high-quality, custom accordions that have been used by both amateur and professional musicians alike; and

WHEREAS, Colligan's lifelong dedication to Cajun music and instrument making has contributed significantly to preserving and advancing this unique cultural art form; and

WHEREAS, other celebrated accordion players from the Cankton area include Clarence "Junior" Martin, Phil Menard, Mack Comeaux, Alex Touchet, and Felix Richard and his son, Sterling Richard, of the band "Cankton Express", each of whom has enriched the musical heritage of Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, beyond these notable names, Cankton is home to many more local accordion players who gather at family events, community dances, and cultural festivals to play and preserve Cajun music, ensuring the continuation of this beloved tradition; and

WHEREAS, the village of Cankton has rightfully earned recognition for producing, supporting, and sustaining Cajun accordion music through its people, values, and culture.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby recognize and commend the village of Cankton for its historical and cultural contributions to Cajun music and does hereby designate the village of Cankton as the "Accordion Capital of Louisiana".

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Cankton Mayor Kevin Colligan.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE