

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 36

BY REPRESENTATIVE EGAN

A RESOLUTION

To commend James C. Walsh on being named 2026 Hibernian of the Year in Louisiana.

WHEREAS, it is most fitting to recognize James C. Walsh for many achievements and to commend him for being recognized by the Ancient Order of Hibernians of Louisiana as the 2026 Hibernian of the Year; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Walsh was born in 1940 in New Brunswick, New Jersey, to an immigrant family; his father, James Patrick Walsh, immigrated from Charlestown, County Mayo, Ireland, to the United States in the 1920s; his mother Elizabeth's family arrived from Hungary and Czechoslovakia in the 1890s; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Walsh's first language was Hungarian, which he learned from his beloved grandmother, Erzebet "Elsie" Nagy; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Walsh worked at automotive parts factories while taking night classes at Rutgers University; he enrolled at the University of Alabama, where he met his lifelong friend, client, and business partner, future NFL Hall of Fame quarterback Joe Namath; he also befriended future New Orleans civic leader Eddie Sapir; and

WHEREAS, after completing his undergraduate degree, Mr. Walsh remained in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, to attend the University of Alabama School of Law; he graduated in 1966 and began his legal career in New York City; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Walsh initially practiced civil defense in Brooklyn, but soon after, he began negotiating contracts and endorsements for Namath; he proved to be an innovator in sports and entertainment law by securing endorsements and ventures ranging from typewriters and razors to television appearances; he famously spearheaded Namath's deal to promote BeautyMist pantyhose; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Walsh co-founded a law firm with Johnny Carson's attorney and manager, Henry Bushkin, and film producer and financier, Arnold Kopelson; he grew his client roster to include other prominent athletes, including NFL quarterback Doug Williams and boxer Sean O'Grady; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Walsh discovered comedian Andy Kaufman in New York in the 1970s; he served as the comedian's first agent and manager and secured performance slots at prominent clubs in New York City; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Walsh met local fashion maven, Yvonne LaFleur, in 1979 during a flight from New Orleans to New York; he sparked a romance with her six months later while visiting Lucky Pierre's in New Orleans, and they married in 1981; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Walsh relocated to New Orleans after marrying Yvonne, and they raised seven children together; he resides in the city today; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Walsh won an Emmy for his role as an executive producer of the HBO Sports documentary, *Namath*; he is a longtime member of the founding board of the Joe Namath Charitable Foundation; and

WHEREAS, James C. Walsh's life is defined by his faith, loyalty, friendship, and distinctly Irish ability to turn hard work and imagination into an inspiring story; he is most deserving of the highest recognition for his incredible achievements.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend James C. Walsh on being named 2026 Hibernian of the Year in Louisiana and does hereby extend sincere wishes that he remain prosperous in all of his endeavors.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES