

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 72

BY REPRESENTATIVE ORGERON

A RESOLUTION

To commend Sophia Patout and Layla Porter on winning a Future Farmers of America national championship competition for their Coastal Restoration Heroes program.

WHEREAS, Louisiana continues to experience coastal land loss at a rate of approximately ten square miles per year, posing a significant threat to the environment, economy, and communities of the state, including Ascension Parish; and

WHEREAS, Sophia Patout and Layla Porter, members of the St. Amant High School Future Farmers of America Chapter, started a Coastal Restoration Heroes program in 2022, focused on coastal restoration on West Grand Terre Island; and

WHEREAS, Sophia and Layla sought to create a program for students to actively participate in coastal restoration efforts by working with Restore or Retreat Inc. to plant native *Spartina alterniflora* (smooth cordgrass) and *Avicennia germinans* (black mangroves) on the barrier island to support shoreline stabilization and erosion control, foster ecosystem recovery and resilience, and create hurricane buffers; and

WHEREAS, these students not only met, but exceeded the program goals by partnering with multiple restoration organizations, mobilizing student volunteers for field restoration activities, and planting more than six thousand native plants by March of 2025, protecting and enhancing approximately eighteen acres of backside interior saltmarsh; and

WHEREAS, these efforts not only reflect a strong commitment to preserving Louisiana's coast, but also serve as an inspirational model for youth engagement in environmental conservation; and

WHEREAS, the Future Farmers of America national chapter awards program recognizes outstanding chapters that show innovation in growing leaders, strengthening agriculture, and building communities; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of their exceptional hard work and initiative, Sophia and Layla won the building communities division national championship award from the Future Farmers of America for the Coastal Restoration Heroes program they created.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend Sophia Patout and Layla Porter on their exceptional leadership, environmental stewardship, and civic responsibility and for winning the Future Farmers of America building communities national championship for their Coastal Restoration Heroes program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Sophia Patout and Layla Porter.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES