

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 54

BY SENATOR MILLS AND REPRESENTATIVES TERRY LANDRY AND BARRAS

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To commend the city of New Iberia, Louisiana, for being nationally recognized as a 2013 historic rebound town by Cable News Network (CNN).

WHEREAS, in March 2013, CNN reviewed small towns across the nation that were commended for their inspirational, small town come back tales; and

WHEREAS, CNN writer, Jordan Rane, listed New Iberia, Louisiana, as a historic rebound town, naming the city as "Reborn on the bayou"; and

WHEREAS, in 1779 the city of New Iberia was founded by a group of five hundred colonists who established a settlement around Spanish Lake, and originally called the town "Nueva Iberia" in honor of the Iberia Peninsula, and the French referred to the town as "Nouvelle Iberie" while the American settlers called it "New Town"; and

WHEREAS, the vintage bayou town's main street was a barren row of boarded-up shops for an estimated ten years, with decaying landmark art deco theaters like The Evangeline; and

WHEREAS, the city's latest renaissance has produced a Great American Street Award and a revitalized commercial district featuring popular Cajun and Creole eateries, rows of exciting new shopping experiences, as well as the beautifully restored Evangeline Theater, renamed the Sliman Theater, that hosts live concerts that attract fans from across the United States and abroad; and

WHEREAS, numerous high points still color New Iberia, including the pin-up antebellum mansion known as Shadows on the Teche, the world-renowned Tabasco factory, and the two-hundred fifty acre Jungle Gardens at Avery Island, Louisiana, seven miles south of New Iberia; and

WHEREAS, New Iberia, Louisiana, is listed as one of eight cities across the country noted for its community efforts to revive the local economy, making the city and its people a popular attraction; and

WHEREAS, the city is listed alongside Coronado, California, "The little peninsula that could"; Paducah, Kentucky, "Small town with big art"; Frederick, Maryland, "After the

flood-cute, shopping"; Ely, Nevada, "The mettle of nowhere"; Deland, Florida, "Classic revivalist"; and El Dorado, Arkansas, "Raising the boom"; and

WHEREAS, Greater Iberia Chamber of Commerce President and CEO, Janet Faulk-Gonzales, indicated that in 2005, New Iberia was the first city in Louisiana to be awarded the Great American Main Street Award; and

WHEREAS, credited for her planning and zoning, City Director Jane Braud works to make New Iberia a tourist destination to visitors and residents alike; and

WHEREAS, New Iberia Mayor Hilda Curry indicates CNN's spotlight is a tremendous honor for the city and praises all investors, business owners, workers, residents and visitors who contributed to this distinction; and

WHEREAS, Jane Braud indicates by 1993, twelve historic buildings were vacant and in dire need of repair, while business owners, the Main Street Program, and local government were asked to invest in restoration projects; and

WHEREAS, what is unique about New Iberia's revitalization is that investors are moving into restored buildings and remain deeply invested in the city; and

WHEREAS, Fran Thibodeaux, executive director of the Iberia Parish Convention and Visitor's Bureau, indicates this is the second time that CNN has recognized New Iberia as an amazing city.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby extend its highest commendations to the city of New Iberia, Louisiana, for being recognized as a 2013 historic rebound town by Cable News Network.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Chamber President, Janet Faulk-Gonzales, City Director of Planning and Zoning, Jane Braud, Mayor Hilda Curry, and Executive Director of the Iberia Parish Convention and Visitors Bureau, Fran Thibodeaux.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES