

By: Homer

H.C.R. No. 163

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, Celebrated artist George Rodrigue has given most  
2 generously of his time and talent to assist recovery efforts after  
3 Hurricanes Katrina and Rita; and

4 WHEREAS, A native of New Iberia, the heart of Cajun country,  
5 Mr. Rodrigue started painting and sculpting as a child; he studied  
6 art at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and later the Art  
7 Center College of Design in Los Angeles; returning to Louisiana in  
8 1967, he painted canvasses imbued with his love for the landscapes,  
9 people, legends, and motifs of Acadiana; his work was exhibited in  
10 London and Paris and was chosen by the U.S. State Department as an  
11 official gift for visiting heads of state; and

12 WHEREAS, In 1984, Mr. Rodrigue was commissioned to illustrate  
13 a book of Cajun ghost stories; inspired by the image of a beloved  
14 pet, a spaniel-terrier mix, he painted his vision of the mythical  
15 loup-garou; the appealing Blue Dog, with its pointy ears and  
16 enigmatic gaze, continued to find its way into his paintings of live  
17 oak trees, cemeteries, and myriad other settings over the years,  
18 achieving iconic status and bringing him international fame; and

19 WHEREAS, In recent years, Mr. Rodrigue has gained renown for  
20 his philanthropy as well as his art; he raised half a million  
21 dollars for the American Red Cross after September 11, 2001,  
22 through sales of prints from his painting "God Bless America"; he  
23 has supported numerous Louisiana arts groups and in 2003, he  
24 conducted a weeklong workshop for children from around the world at

1 the National Mall in Washington, D.C.; his print incorporating the  
2 children's artwork and the Blue Dog raised \$400,000 for the  
3 International Child Arts Festival; and

4 WHEREAS, This civic-minded artist sprang into action with his  
5 Blue Dog Relief effort following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in  
6 2005; he created a series of prints that raised more than \$1.5  
7 million for such organizations as the Chef Paul Prudhomme Katrina  
8 Fund, the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, and the Southeast  
9 Louisiana chapters of the Red Cross and the United Way; moreover, he  
10 painted a special Blue Dog entangled in red tape for the United  
11 Way's nationwide campaign to improve access to crisis aid through a  
12 consistent three-digit 2-1-1 dialing system; and

13 WHEREAS, Launching his own campaign for levees capable of  
14 withstanding Category 5 hurricanes, Mr. Rodrigue sent posters,  
15 bumper stickers, t-shirts, and buttons with the slogan "To Stay  
16 Alive We Need Levee 5" to every member of the U.S. Congress;  
17 proceeds from related silkscreen prints and campaign materials have  
18 been donated to the New Orleans Museum of Art, which was closed for  
19 six months because of flood damage; overall, his Blue Dog Relief  
20 program has raised some \$2.5 million for Gulf Coast recovery; and

21 WHEREAS, The Blue Dog has long been a pop art sensation;  
22 through his tireless dedication to hurricane relief efforts, George  
23 Rodrigue has made the Blue Dog a symbol of hope, caring, and  
24 generosity as well; now, therefore, be it

25 RESOLVED, That the 81st Legislature of the State of Texas  
26 hereby commend George Rodrigue for his philanthropic work following  
27 Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and extend to him best wishes for

1 continued success in his endeavors; and, be it further

2           RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
3 prepared for Mr. Rodrigue as an expression of high regard by the  
4 Texas House of Representatives and Senate.