

1 State of Arkansas
2 95th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2025

HMR 1005

4
5 By: Representative Barker

6
7
8 **HOUSE MEMORIAL RESOLUTION**

9 TO REMEMBER LAWRENCE ERVIN BEARDEN AND TO RECOGNIZE
10 HIS LIFETIME OF DEDICATION TO HIS FAMILY AND
11 COMMUNITY, THE STATE OF ARKANSAS, AND THE NATION.

12
13
14 **Subtitle**

15 TO REMEMBER LAWRENCE ERVIN BEARDEN AND
16 TO RECOGNIZE HIS LIFETIME OF DEDICATION
17 TO HIS FAMILY AND COMMUNITY, THE STATE
18 OF ARKANSAS, AND THE NATION.

19
20 WHEREAS, Lawrence Ervin Bearden, formerly of Smackover, Arkansas,
21 passed away on Monday, February 3, 2025, at the age of eighty-six (86); and

22
23 WHEREAS, Lawrence Ervin Bearden was born in Chidester, Arkansas, on
24 April 14, 1938, to Walter and Ruby Bearden, and he graduated from Fairview
25 High School before earning a bachelor's degree in Business Administration
26 from Southern State College (now Southern Arkansas University) in Magnolia in
27 1961; and

28
29 WHEREAS, during his time at Southern State College, Lawrence Ervin
30 Bearden served as President of the Student Government Association and was an
31 active member of the Wesley Foundation, where he met Ann Oliver, the love of
32 his life; and

33
34 WHEREAS, Lawrence Ervin Bearden and Ann Oliver married in 1961 and
35 shared sixty-three (63) years of devoted marriage; and

36



1 WHEREAS, Lawrence Ervin Bearden honorably served in the United States
2 Army Reserve, completing Basic Infantry Training at Fort Benning, Georgia, in
3 1957, and later commanding the 238th Transportation Company of Camden and the
4 458th United States Army Research Laboratory Stock Control Company of El
5 Dorado; and
6

7 WHEREAS, Lawrence Ervin Bearden retired from the United States Army
8 Reserve as a Lieutenant Colonel after twenty-eight (28) years of service; and
9

10 WHEREAS, Lawrence Ervin Bearden had a distinguished career in the oil
11 industry, working for BHP as a production foreman and later as an independent
12 producer, contributing to the economic growth of Arkansas for more than four
13 (4) decades; and
14

15 WHEREAS, Lawrence Ervin Bearden was a passionate advocate for
16 education, serving twelve (12) years on the Smackover School District's Board
17 of Directors, including serving as President of the Smackover School
18 District's Board of Directors; and
19

20 WHEREAS, Lawrence Ervin Bearden later served four (4) terms on the
21 Southern Arkansas University Foundation's Board of Governors, including three
22 (3) years as Chair of Southern Arkansas University Foundation's Board of
23 Governors; and
24

25 WHEREAS, in 2016, former Governor Asa Hutchinson appointed Lawrence
26 Ervin Bearden to the Board of Trustees of Southern Arkansas University, where
27 he played a key role in advancing the university during a period of
28 significant growth, including the construction of new residence halls, the
29 President's House, the Poultry Education Facility, and the renovation of the
30 Alumni Center at both Southern Arkansas University and Southern Arkansas
31 University Tech; and
32

33 WHEREAS, Lawrence Ervin Bearden's generosity and commitment to
34 education led to the establishment of an endowment for the Southern Arkansas
35 University band program, resulting in the naming of the band hall in honor of
36 his father-in-law, Richard O. Oliver, Southern Arkansas University's first

1 band director; and

2

3 WHEREAS, Lawrence Ervin Bearden was appointed to the Arkansas Workforce
4 Investment Board and Adult Education Study Committee by former Governor
5 Michael Dale "Mike" Huckabee in 2005 and was reappointed in 2008 by Governor
6 Mickey Dale "Mike" Beebe, demonstrating his lifelong commitment to workforce
7 development and economic progress in Arkansas; and

8

9 WHEREAS, Lawrence Ervin Bearden was deeply involved in his community,
10 serving as president of the Smackover Jaycees, the Smackover Library Board of
11 Trustees, and the Board of Administration at Smackover First United Methodist
12 Church, where he was also a Sunday school teacher, certified lay speaker, and
13 president of the Education Board; and

14

15 WHEREAS, his unwavering faith and compassion led him to participate in
16 six (6) mission trips to Haiti, where he worked to improve the lives of those
17 in need; and

18

19 WHEREAS, Lawrence Ervin Bearden was a loving and devoted husband,
20 father, grandfather, and great-grandfather who is survived by his wife, Ann
21 Oliver Bearden, his sons, Richard (Shirley) Bearden and Mark Bearden, his
22 grandchildren, Ashley (Alex) Campbell, Jordan (Tyler) Bearden, and James
23 (Anna) Bearden, his great-granddaughter, Aubrey Campbell, his sister, Linda
24 (Dick) Mosley, and many extended family members and friends who cherished his
25 presence; and

26

27 WHEREAS, Lawrence Ervin Bearden was preceded in death by his son, David
28 Bearden, his parents, Walter and Ruby Bearden, and his brothers, Frank
29 Bearden and Larry Bearden; and

30

31 WHEREAS, Lawrence Ervin Bearden's legacy of leadership, service, and
32 integrity will endure for generations to come;

33

34 NOW THEREFORE,

35 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL
36 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36

THAT the House of Representatives remember Lawrence Ervin Bearden and recognize his lifelong commitment to public service, education, economic development, and faith, as well as his invaluable contributions to the State of Arkansas and the nation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT upon adoption, a copy of this resolution be provided to the family of Lawrence Ervin Bearden by the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives as an expression of the General Assembly's deepest condolences and highest esteem.