

1 State of Arkansas  
2 85th General Assembly  
3 First Extraordinary Session, 2006

HMR 1003

4  
5 By: Representatives L. Smith, Blair, Bond, Borhauer, Bradford, Childers, Cook, Edwards, Harrelson, J.  
6 Hutchinson, T. Hutchinson, J. Johnson, D. Johnson, Lamoureux, Ledbetter, Mahony, J. Martin,  
7 McDaniel, Pate, Pickett, Pritchard, Reep, Saunders, Thomason, Thompson, Thyer, Verkamp, Walters,  
8 Wills, Wood

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10  
11 **HOUSE MEMORIAL RESOLUTION**

12 CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF RICHARD  
13 B. ATKINSON AND MOURNING HIS PASSING.

14  
15 **Subtitle**

16 CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND CONTRIBUTIONS  
17 OF RICHARD B. ATKINSON AND MOURNING HIS  
18 PASSING.

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20  
21 WHEREAS, Richard B. Atkinson, Dean and Professor of the University of  
22 Arkansas School of Law in Fayetteville, Arkansas, passed away at the age of  
23 fifty-eight (58) on August 4, 2005, while attending the American Bar  
24 Association annual meeting; and

25  
26 WHEREAS, Professor Atkinson was known by many as a man of integrity,  
27 sincerity, humor, and compassion; had a passion for the law and teaching; and  
28 appreciated and admired the arts and antiquities; and

29  
30 WHEREAS, Professor Atkinson graduated Phi Beta Kappa with a bachelor of  
31 arts degree from Duke University; received a master's degree in divinity and  
32 a juris doctorate from Yale University; became an associate with the law firm  
33 of King and Spalding in Atlanta, Georgia; and was a visiting professor at the  
34 University of North Carolina, Emory University, and Georgia State University;  
35 and

36



1           WHEREAS, Professor Atkinson was recruited to the University of Arkansas  
2 by his law school classmate and later President Bill Clinton, who remarked of  
3 his friend, "Richard always lived as he believed, that we could always be  
4 better tomorrow than we were."; and

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6           WHEREAS, as a professor of law at the University of Arkansas School of  
7 Law, he maintained high expectations and an abiding personal interest in each  
8 of his students; was Chair of the Faculty Appointments Committee; gave bar  
9 review lectures around the nation; received state committee appointments by  
10 the Governor of Arkansas, including service as chair of the Workers'  
11 Compensation Reform Commission; and served as interim dean for the 1990-91  
12 academic year; and

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14           WHEREAS, on January 6, 2003, Professor Atkinson became the 10th Dean of  
15 the University of Arkansas School of Law, a position in which he excelled as  
16 a leader at fundraising, planning for new facilities, encouraging students,  
17 and supporting the staff and faculty; and

18  
19           WHEREAS, under Dean Atkinson's leadership, the School of Law was  
20 included among the "most diverse law schools in the country" by the 2006 U.S.  
21 News and World Report's "America's Best Graduate Schools" and ranked No. 12  
22 in the specialized category of "Legal Writing"; was ranked in 2004 by The  
23 National Jurist magazine among a select group of public law schools it  
24 regarded as a "Very Good Value"; and was ranked 13th out of 172 in the nation  
25 in success in improving gender and ethnic diversity over the 10-year period  
26 from 1993-2003, as reported by The National Jurist; and

27  
28           WHEREAS, Dean Atkinson was a member and served three (3) terms as Chair  
29 of the Board of Directors of the Washington Regional Medical Center; was a  
30 founding board member of the Washington Regional Medical Foundation; and was  
31 a founding board member of the Northwest Arkansas Radiation Therapy  
32 Institute; and

33  
34           WHEREAS, Dean Atkinson is survived by his partner Michael Hollomon,  
35 Director of Psychiatric Services at Washington Regional Medical Center in  
36 Fayetteville; John Atkinson and his wife Lee of Greensboro, North Carolina;

1 Paul Atkinson and his wife Scarlett of Myrtle Beach, South Carolina; his  
2 nieces and nephews Sarah Atkinson and her husband Grant Gosch of Asheville,  
3 North Carolina; David Atkinson of Charleston, South Carolina; Lauren Atkinson  
4 of Greensboro, North Carolina; Jeremy Martin, his wife Stacey, and their son  
5 Jaxon of Chapin, South Carolina; Jason Martin of West Columbia, South  
6 Carolina; his aunt Betty Duffield and his cousin Susie Bleich, both of  
7 Fayetteville; and a host of other cousins around the country; and

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9 WHEREAS, the House of Representatives of the Eighty-Fifth General  
10 Assembly of the State of Arkansas recognizes Richard Atkinson's life and  
11 achievements and mourns his passing,

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13 NOW THEREFORE,

14 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE EIGHTY-FIFTH GENERAL  
15 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

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17 THAT the House of Representatives honors the memory of Richard  
18 Atkinson, celebrates his life and significant contributions to the Arkansas  
19 Bar, academia, and public service, and remembers him with the deepest  
20 admiration and respect for his personal warmth, dedication, decency, humor,  
21 and consideration for others.

22  
23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the individual members of the House of  
24 Representatives hereby express sincere condolences to the members of Richard  
25 Atkinson's family, and upon adoption of this resolution, a copy shall be  
26 provided to the family and to Richard Atkinson's life partner Michael  
27 Hollomon by the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives.