

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

SMR 3

4
5 By: Senator Madison
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8 **SENATE MEMORIAL RESOLUTION**

9 CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF RICHARD
10 B. ATKINSON AND MOURNING HIS PASSING.

11
12 **Subtitle**

13 CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND CONTRIBUTIONS
14 OF RICHARD B. ATKINSON AND MOURNING HIS
15 PASSING.
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18 WHEREAS, Richard B. Atkinson, Dean and Professor of the University of
19 Arkansas School of Law in Fayetteville, Arkansas, passed away at the age of
20 fifty-eight (58) on August 4, 2005, while attending the American Bar
21 Association annual meeting; and
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23 WHEREAS, Professor Atkinson was known by many as a man of integrity,
24 sincerity, humor, and compassion; had a passion for the law and teaching; and
25 appreciated and admired the arts and antiquities; and
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27 WHEREAS, Professor Atkinson graduated Phi Beta Kappa with a bachelor of
28 arts degree from Duke University; received a master's degree in divinity and
29 a juris doctorate from Yale University; became an associate with the law firm
30 of King and Spalding in Atlanta, Georgia; and was a visiting professor at the
31 University of North Carolina, Emory University, and Georgia State University;
32 and
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34 WHEREAS, Professor Atkinson was recruited to the University of Arkansas
35 by his law school classmate and later President Bill Clinton, who remarked of
36 his friend, "Richard always lived as he believed, that we could always be



1 better tomorrow than we were."; and

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

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

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

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

30
31 WHEREAS, Dean Atkinson is survived by his partner Michael Hollomon,
32 Director of Psychiatric Services at Washington Regional Medical Center in
33 Fayetteville; John Atkinson and his wife Lee of Greensboro, North Carolina;
34 Paul Atkinson and his wife Scarlett of Myrtle Beach, South Carolina; his
35 nieces and nephews Sarah Atkinson and her husband Grant Gosch of Asheville,
36 North Carolina; David Atkinson of Charleston, South Carolina; Lauren Atkinson

1 of Greensboro, North Carolina; Jeremy Martin, his wife Stacey, and their son
2 Jaxon of Chapin, South Carolina; Jason Martin of West Columbia, South
3 Carolina; his aunt Betty Duffield and his cousin Susie Bleich, both of
4 Fayetteville; and a host of other cousins around the country; and
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6 WHEREAS, the Senate of the Eighty-Fifth General Assembly of the State
7 of Arkansas recognizes Richard Atkinson's life and achievements and mourns
8 his passing,
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10 NOW THEREFORE,

11 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE EIGHTY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE
12 STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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14 THAT the Senate honors the memory of Richard Atkinson, celebrates his
15 life and significant contributions to the Arkansas Bar, academia, and public
16 service, and remembers him with the deepest admiration and respect for his
17 personal warmth, dedication, decency, humor, and consideration for others.
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19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the individual members of the Senate hereby
20 express sincere condolences to the members of Richard Atkinson's family, and
21 upon adoption of this resolution, a copy shall be provided to the family and
22 to Richard Atkinson's life partner Michael Hollomon by the Secretary of the
23 Senate.
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