

1 State of Arkansas
2 86th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2007

SR 33

4
5 By: Senator Hendren
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8 **SENATE RESOLUTION**

9 COMMENDING AL KUETTNER ON HIS REMARKABLE COVERAGE
10 OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT AND HIS
11 CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NATIONAL DIALOGUE.
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13 **Subtitle**

14 COMMENDING AL KUETTNER ON HIS REMARKABLE
15 COVERAGE OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT
16 AND HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NATIONAL
17 DIALOGUE.
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20 WHEREAS, Al Kuettner of Gravette, Arkansas, was born in Georgia in
21 1913, at a time when racial lines were still clearly drawn in the South; and
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23 WHEREAS, Mr. Kuettner "knew from observation that it was wrong if one
24 person is a citizen and the other person is not"; and
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26 WHEREAS, Mr. Kuettner began writing for a newspaper in Atlanta
27 following graduation from high school during the Great Depression, covering
28 anything the paper needed; after nine (9) years with the local paper, he
29 received job offers on the same day from The Associated Press and United
30 Press International; and he took the job with United Press International,
31 becoming bureau news manager in several cities in the South; and
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33 WHEREAS, in 1952, he began covering the civil rights movement and
34 traveled all over the South for his stories; he watched blacks and whites
35 fight over their differences but felt that most of the anger originated with
36 the way the blacks and whites were brought up, as he later watched those same



1 people become friends with each other; and soon "realized that much of the
2 trouble was this cleavage between custom and reality"; and

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4 WHEREAS, Mr. Kuettner covered Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., for several
5 years, following him from speech to speech, and was around Dr. King so much
6 that people thought he was on Dr. King's staff; and

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8 WHEREAS, Mr. Kuettner respected Dr. King and saw him as a brilliant
9 preacher with a mission bigger than anything he had ever seen; and was
10 sitting only a few feet from Dr. King when he gave the 1963 speech during the
11 March on Washington, where Dr. King famously gave his 'I have a dream'
12 speech; and

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14 WHEREAS, Mr. Kuettner left journalism in 1968 to work for the
15 University of Cincinnati as the head of public relations and assistant to the
16 president; and

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18 WHEREAS, Mr. Kuettner covered virtually the entire civil rights
19 movement, having been with it for twenty (20) years; and with tremendous help
20 from his ever-faithful and wonderful wife, Helen, wrote a draft of a book
21 recalling his years covering his experiences as a reporter during the civil
22 rights movement; and

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24 WHEREAS, Mr. Kuettner and Helen moved to Gravette, Arkansas, nearly
25 thirty (30) years ago; and

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27 WHEREAS, Mr. Kuettner continued to work on his book draft and wrote the
28 last chapter in 2004; and the book covers integration at Central High School
29 in Little Rock, Arkansas, Ole Miss, the University of Alabama, and the
30 University of Georgia, and also includes portions on Alabama Governor George
31 Wallace, Rosa Parks, and Medgar Evers; and

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33 WHEREAS, Mr. Kuettner says that the years spent covering the civil
34 rights movement had a lasting impact on him and "changed me completely", and
35 also had a lasting impact on his son as his son sees "[b]lack people...the same
36 as white people",

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NOW THEREFORE,
BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE EIGHTY-SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE
STATE OF ARKANSAS:

 THAT the Senate commends Mr. Al Kuettner on his remarkable coverage of
the civil rights movement and his contributions to the national dialogue.

 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that upon adoption of this resolution, an
appropriate copy shall be provided to Mr. Kuettner by the Secretary of the
Senate.