

No. R-435. House concurrent resolution joyfully extending birthday wishes to the grande dame of Montpelier, Lola Aiken, who turns 100 on June 24, 2012.

(H.C.R.333)

Offered by: All Members of the House

Offered by: All Members of the Senate

Whereas, no person more enthusiastically embodies the spirit of Vermont and the state's capital city of Montpelier than Lola Aiken, who this year is celebrating her 100th birthday, and

Whereas, Lola was the devoted wife and political confidante of former Governor and United States Senator George Aiken, and

Whereas, after graduating as valedictorian from Montpelier High School and working at a local law firm, Lola applied for a state house job at the office of the secretary of state, and her life's destiny was forever changed, and

Whereas, Lola Pierotti soon became acquainted with many of the state's political leaders, including the horticulturalist from Putney, George Aiken, who served as speaker, lieutenant governor, and, starting in 1937, governor until his election to the United States Senate in 1940, and

Whereas, newly elected Senator Aiken recognized Lola Pierotti as a politically astute woman with strong management skills, and he invited her to work in his office in the nation's capital, and in time the Senator appointed her as chief of his Washington staff, and

Whereas, after the death of the Senator's first wife, Lola Pierotti became his social companion, and in 1967 they wed, and this political team was one with a deep personal bond, and

Whereas, Lola Aiken could strike up friendly conversations with members of Congress and their spouses from both sides of the aisle, proving of great advantage to Senator Aiken, and

Whereas, the Aikens' successful political and personal partnership in Washington, D.C. continued until the Senator's retirement in 1975, when they came home to Vermont and settled in George Aiken's home town of Putney, and

Whereas, when the Governor (as she still fondly refers to her late husband) died in 1984, Lola Aiken returned to her home town of Montpelier, becoming active on the boards of many organizations including Champlain College and the Friends of the State House, and

Whereas, Lola Aiken has been described by a friend as an elegantly dressed, optimistic, and sassy lady who is eternally optimistic, and

Whereas, a pioneer in advancing in Washington the cause of women, Lola lived up to her reputation as being tough as nails on one occasion when she single-handedly decided that a woman should sit at the front table of the Coffee Corner restaurant in Montpelier, where on many mornings, even recently, she moderated lively discussions on the issues of the day, and

Whereas, the state house beckoned Lola once more in 2000 when the General Assembly appointed her to a special committee formed to recommend a solution to the long-lingering and vexing dilemma of choosing historically accurate carpeting for the Senate chamber, and, perhaps not surprisingly with Lola Aiken on the job, the mission was accomplished, and

Whereas, the members of this legislature wish to pay special tribute to a most endearing and gracious Vermonter whose life has truly been of historic magnitude, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly joyfully extends happy 100th birthday wishes to the grande dame of Montpelier, Lola Aiken, a Vermont treasure, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Lola Aiken in Montpelier.