

No. R-372. House concurrent resolution in memory of Vermont journalist Rod Clarke.

(H.C.R.285)

Offered by: Representatives McFaun of Barre Town, Condon of Colchester, Olsen of Londonderry, French of Randolph, Lewis of Berlin, Troiano of Stannard and Walz of Barre City

Offered by: Senators Benning, Cummings, Doyle, Pollina, and White

Whereas, unconventional journalist Rod Clarke started his working life employed as a bartender and bouncer, a bulldozer operator in an open pit mine, and a logger, and

Whereas, in 1965, he and his wife, Loretta, to whom he was married for 44 years until her death, decided to move to Vermont, and

Whereas, observing the 1966 gubernatorial contest between Phil Hoff and Richard Snelling enticed Rod Clarke to become a journalist, and

Whereas, despite Rod Clarke's never having written a word professionally nor studied journalism, United Press International (UPI)'s Montpelier bureau hired this naturally talented reporter and wordsmith, and

Whereas, early in Rod Clarke's UPI tenure, the wire service assigned him to write a story on a Northeast Kingdom commune, and he did not return for an extended period of time, deciding instead to homestead by the Canadian border, and

Whereas, amazingly, UPI welcomed Rod Clarke back and appointed him bureau manager and Vermont State news editor, and he earned numerous journalism awards and a Pulitzer Prize nomination, and

Whereas, Rod Clarke expertly hosted Vermont Public Radio's "Switchboard" program and other public affairs radio broadcasts, including a show that originated from the State House cafeteria on Barre's WSNO, and

Whereas, Rod Clarke was the author of *Carved in Stone*, a history of the Barre granite industry, and published *Thirsty's Guide to Vermont's Best Bars* and the humorous *Woodchuck Cards* post card series, and

Whereas, a passionate rider and defender of motorcyclists, Rod Clarke established Freedom of the Road for Vermont and chaired the National Coalition of Motorcyclists, and

Whereas, later in life, while living in Florida, he worked as a political campaign manager, public relations consultant, public television producer, and freelance writer, and

Whereas, Rod Clarke returned to Vermont in 2015, prepared his own carefully crafted obituary, and died on January 25, 2016, leaving his beloved family of six children, 15 grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren and asked his friends to celebrate his life at a local pub, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly extends its sincere condolences to the family of Rod Clarke, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the members of Rod Clarke's family.