

No. R-302. House concurrent resolution honoring James Cooke for his memorable and historically informative theatrical portrayal of President Calvin Coolidge.

(H.C.R.228)

Offered by: Representatives Devereux of Mount Holly, Branagan of Georgia, Clarkson of Woodstock, and Jerman of Essex

Whereas, Jim Cooke is a character actor of extraordinary talent with an insightful knowledge of Calvin Coolidge, who was a Plymouth Notch native and our nation's 30th president, and

Whereas, the actor was born in Montpelier, earned a bachelor's degree in English from the University of New Hampshire and a master's degree in theater from Emerson College, and

Whereas, Jim Cooke taught at several colleges, and

Whereas, theatrical life is his true calling, and he performed in summer stock and Boston area ensemble companies, and

Whereas, the seeds of Jim Cooke's career as a solo historical character performer were sown in 1975 when he appeared as Calvin Coolidge in a new production entitled *The Calvin Coolidge Follies*, and

Whereas, Calvin Coolidge reentered Jim Cooke's theatrical repertoire on July 4, 1985 (Coolidge's birthday), when Jim Cooke premiered his solo dramatization, *Calvin Coolidge: More Than Two Words*, at the Calvin Coolidge State Historic Site, located at the former president's Plymouth Notch birthplace, and

Whereas, Jim Cooke's Coolidge script is derived from the former President's 1930 autobiography and letters Coolidge wrote to his father, and

Whereas, Jim Cooke subsequently premiered distinctive solo productions, in which he appeared as John Quincy Adams, Edward Everett, or Daniel Webster, and this quartet of historical solo performances are collectively referred to as the actor's Cranky Yankees, and

Whereas, his Calvin Coolidge portrayal, including the Coolidge speech "Vermont Is a State I Love," has found especially appreciate Vermont audiences, including at Farmers Night in the State House and repeatedly at the Plymouth Notch, now a State Historic Site, and

Whereas, Jim Cooke's July 4, 2015 presentation of *Calvin Coolidge: More Than Two Words* at Plymouth Notch was this accomplished actor's final portrayal of the nation's 30th president, marking the conclusion of a unique theatrical run in Vermont and other venues, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly honors James Cooke for his memorable and historically informative theatrical portrayal of President Calvin Coolidge, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Jim Cooke and to the Calvin Coolidge Presidential Foundation in Plymouth Notch.