

# State of Vermont

## House of Representatives



Montpelier, Vermont

### Concurrent House Resolution

H.C.R. 287

House concurrent resolution honoring the life and legacy of Robert Romeo De Cormier Jr. of Belmont

Offered by: All Members of the House

Offered by: All Members of the Senate

Whereas, for Robert De Cormier, music, and especially choral music, was a creative way to express his dedication to promoting peace and justice in the world, and

Whereas, he studied at Colby College in Maine and the University of New Mexico before joining the U.S. Army during World War II, and

Whereas, while he was serving in Germany, mortar fire severely damaged his wrist, ending any hope of his pursuing a trumpeter's career; but back home in New York, he joined the Congress of Industrial Organizations Chorus and met the folk singer Pete Seeger, forming an enduring friendship, and

Whereas, Robert De Cormier earned a master's degree from the famed Juilliard School of Music and taught at New York City's Little Red School House, where one of his students, Mary Travers, would become part of the Peter, Paul and Mary folk trio with whom he maintained a close personal and professional relationship, and

Whereas, his diverse choral leadership included The Belafonte Folk Singers, the De Cormier Singers, and the New York Choral Society, and

Whereas, he helped found the Vermont Symphony Orchestra (VSO) Chorus in 1993, and

Whereas, in 1999, Robert De Cormier formed Counterpoint, an 11-member ensemble that performs "choral chamber music throughout Vermont's communities and beyond," whose broad repertoire includes classical, folk, sacred, and spiritual music, and which has produced a discography of nine recordings reflecting this musical diversity, and

Whereas, Robert De Cormier received the 2002 Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts, and Middlebury College and the University of Vermont each conferred on him an honorary degree, and

Whereas, after his son, Christopher, died in 1977 of cancer at 23 years of age, Robert De Cormier composed "Legacy," a moving choral remembrance set to the poetry of his father-in-law, John Dobbs, and in January 2018 the VSO Chorus remembered its illustrious conductor of 21 years with a heartfelt performance, and

Whereas, the Friends of Robert De Cormier, comprising selected VSO choristers, sang his final work, "Sing for Peace," at St Michael's College, and

Whereas, Robert De Cormier died on November 7, 2017, and his survivors include his wife and musical partner, Louise; daughter, Robin; two grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly honors the life and work of and extends its sincere condolences to the family of Robert Romeo De Cormier Jr. of Belmont, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the family of Robert De Cormier, to Counterpoint, and to the VSO.