

1 A RESOLUTION honoring the 50th anniversary of the Protest Hike, which led to
2 the undamming of Red River Gorge, and the award-winning *Kentucky Afield Radio*
3 documentary "Kentucky's Red November."

4 "It is a country of overtowering edges. Again and again, walking down from the
5 wooded ridgetops above Red River Gorge one comes into the sound of water...The slopes
6 are thickly shrubbed with rhododendron, darkened by the heavy green shade of
7 hemlocks...There are the enclosing sounds of the water falling...Looking and listening are
8 as important as tasting. One drinks in the sense of being in a good place."—Wendell
9 Berry, *The Unforeseen Wilderness*

10 WHEREAS, Red River Gorge welcomes 500,000 visitors annually; and

11 WHEREAS, known for its multitude of hiking trails, its abundant species of
12 wildlife, and its world-class rock climbing, Red River Gorge is a true treasure of our
13 Commonwealth; and

14 WHEREAS, in 1962, in a response to decades of flooding in the Powell County
15 community of Clay City, the United States Army Corps of Engineers made the decision to
16 dam the Red River Gorge to create a flood-control lake. By 1967, as work was preparing
17 to begin, this plan to create Red River Lake was met with immediate backlash from
18 environmental groups worried about the ecological protection and conservation; and

19 WHEREAS, spearheaded by the Sierra Club's Cumberland Chapter, direct and
20 organized opposition to the dam was formed; and

21 WHEREAS, this opposition was notable because of how early in the fight for
22 ecological protection it would fall. The Sierra Club's protest would come before the 1970
23 signing of the National Environmental Policy Act, and it would pre-date the
24 Environmental Protection Agency by two years; and

25 WHEREAS, members of the Sierra Club, which included Jim Kowalski, Carroll
26 Tichenor, and Oscar Gerald, would ultimately send a postcard to Supreme Court Justice
27 William O. Douglas asking him for his presence at Red River Gorge in an attempt to stop

1 the damming of the river, and Justice Douglas would surprisingly respond in the
2 affirmative--also by postcard--if only members of the group would pay for his airfare to
3 and from Lexington; and

4 WHEREAS, on November 18, 1967, Justice Douglas arrived at Red River Gorge,
5 and the famous Protest Hike would occur; and

6 WHEREAS, the Protest Hike would have reverberations for many years to come,
7 and would ultimately be the cornerstone of the fight against the damming of Red River
8 Gorge, bringing Kentucky into the national headlines; and

9 WHEREAS, in 1975, Kentucky Governor Julian Carroll would enter the fray.
10 Urged by the Sierra Club, the Audubon Society, and many other environmental groups to
11 halt construction of the dam, Governor Carroll would research the Gorge and its many
12 merits as a special place in this Commonwealth; and

13 WHEREAS, on September 11, 1975, Governor Carroll would offer his decision that
14 he could find "no compelling reason to build the Red River Dam," citing the ecological
15 bounties, archeological footprints of our Appalachian heritage, and the breathtaking
16 natural beauty of Red River Gorge; and

17 WHEREAS, in 2017, *Kentucky Afield Radio*, a production of the Kentucky
18 Department of Fish and Wildlife, produced "Kentucky's Red November," a radio drama
19 telling the story of this conflict; and

20 WHEREAS, "Kentucky's Red November," produced by Charlie Baglan, would win
21 first place for Audio Communications from the National Association of Government
22 Communicators; and

23 WHEREAS, it is rightful that this body recognize those Kentuckians who have
24 fought to uphold the natural beauty of this Commonwealth, and to honor the courageous
25 spirit of Clay City residents in balancing the devotion to homeplace with the power and
26 majesty of nature; and

27 WHEREAS, in so doing, the members on this day acknowledge the 50th

1 anniversary of the Protest Hike; commend the hard work of the men and women who so
2 selflessly gave of their time and expertise to protect one of Kentucky's natural wonders,
3 Red River Gorge; and acknowledge the *Kentucky Afield Radio* production of "Kentucky's
4 Red November," which so artfully brings to life the events of the Protest Hike and the
5 landmark decisions it would help to bring about;

6 NOW, THEREFORE,

7 ***Be it resolved by the Senate of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of***
8 ***Kentucky:***

9 ➔Section 1. The members of the Senate hereby honor the 50th anniversary of the
10 Protest Hike at Red River Gorge.

11 ➔Section 2. The members honor and commend the hard work of *Kentucky Afield*
12 *Radio* for the production of "Kentucky's Red November," a radio drama that brilliantly
13 highlights the struggles arising from the proposed Red River Lake project.

14 ➔Section 3. The Clerk of the Senate is directed to transmit a copy of this
15 Resolution to Senator Julian M. Carroll.