

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION designating a Livingston County bridge in honor and
2 memory of Jim R. Smith.

3 WHEREAS, Jim R. Smith was the owner of Jim Smith Contracting Co., one of the
4 largest highway contracting companies in Kentucky. He began his career in 1959 as a
5 backhoe operator in his home town of Smithland, Kentucky, performing small earthwork
6 projects, including clearing, excavating, and digging ponds; and

7 WHEREAS, Jim R. Smith turned this operation into a company that constructed
8 many of the interstates and parkways throughout Kentucky. Jim Smith Contracting also
9 expanded into production and placement of asphalt and commercial construction projects,
10 including bridge construction; and

11 WHEREAS, Jim R. Smith and his partner David Reed purchased the Kentucky
12 division of the Illinois Central Railroad (ICG) in 1986, which included the ICG railroad
13 shops used to repair and rebuild locomotives. The shops, which at one time employed as
14 many as 1,500 western Kentuckians, was targeted for closure by ICG. The rail line, which
15 was crucial to the operations of numerous Kentucky industries was a candidate for
16 abandonment by the ICG; and

17 WHEREAS, the Smith-Reed investment in the railroad likely saved over 300 jobs
18 in western Kentucky. The railroad continues to successfully operate today as Paducah &
19 Louisville Railway, Inc.; and

20 WHEREAS, the Smith-Reed partnership was known for its visionary investments.
21 Smith-Reed constructed and operated Watco's Grand Rivers Terminal (GRT), a facility
22 that transloaded coal and other bulk materials from rail car to barge. The GRT facility
23 included an innovative direct dump operation, where the train would pass over a specially
24 designed track to dump the commodity directly into a barge, thereby reducing cost and
25 handling; and

26 WHEREAS, Jim R. Smith was also involved in the coal business, owning and
27 operating J. Smith Coal Co., a successful mining company in the western Kentucky coal

1 fields. He also owned and operated a quarry, and Midwest Terminal, a fuel distributor
2 located in Paducah; and

3 WHEREAS, Jim R. Smith was also the owner of two well-known Paducah,
4 Kentucky landmark facilities Stacey’s Restaurant and the Executive Inn, which was
5 known for bringing in nationally recognized entertainment; and

6 WHEREAS, Jim R. Smith was responsible for enriching the lives of hundreds of
7 Kentucky families by providing high wage jobs. He was also well known for his
8 compassion and generosity to any employee of his companies that were in need; and

9 WHEREAS, Jim R. Smith was an entrepreneur in the true sense of the word. He
10 saw opportunity when others saw only risk. As a result of his vision, many of his
11 operations continue to thrive today, providing employment for hundreds of Kentucky
12 workers;

13 NOW, THEREFORE,

14 ***Be it resolved by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:***

15 ➔Section 1. The Transportation Cabinet shall designate the new bridge currently
16 under construction on United States Highway 60 that spans the Cumberland River near
17 Smithland, KY, as the "Jim R. Smith Memorial Bridge" and shall, within 30 days of the
18 effective date of this Resolution, erect the appropriate signage.