

By: Senator(s) Chassaniol, Harkins, Carter, Parker, Blackwell, Fillingane, Younger, Whaley, Williams, Rhodes, McMahan, Boyd, England, McLendon, Kirby, Berry, McCaughn, Suber, Jordan, Hopson, Robinson, Ladner, Seymour, Wiggins, DeLano, Thompson, Barrett, Barnett, Thomas

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 510

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION MOURNING THE LOSS AND COMMENDING THE
2 LIFE AND PUBLIC CONTRIBUTIONS OF LUSTER BAYLESS OF RULEVILLE,
3 MISSISSIPPI, LEGENDARY COSTUMER TO JOHN WAYNE AND FOUNDER OF
4 UNITED AMERICAN COSTUME COMPANY, AND EXPRESSING THE SYMPATHY OF
5 THE LEGISLATURE ON HIS PASSING.

6 WHEREAS, it is with sadness that we note the passing of
7 Luster Bayless, legendary costumer to John Wayne and Mississippi
8 businessman from Ruleville, Mississippi, on February 11, 2022, at
9 the age of 84; and

10 WHEREAS, Luster's rags to riches story began on October 26,
11 1937, when he was born to David and Jimmie Lee Bayless in
12 Ruleville, Mississippi. The son of sharecroppers, Luster's young
13 life was mostly spent in the cotton fields working on the Macabee
14 Plantation; and

15 WHEREAS, a star quarterback at Ruleville High and talented
16 basketball player, Luster graduated from high school and enlisted
17 in the U.S. Navy where he was a Purser on the *USS Cole*. After the
18 Navy, he enrolled in junior college, but it wasn't long before his
19 dreams of a better life called him away to California; and



20 WHEREAS, in 1959, he sold his college books and hitchhiked
21 from Ruleville to Hollywood, California, where his childhood
22 friend Jimmy George was working as a costumer in the movie
23 industry; and

24 WHEREAS, Luster spent two years learning his craft at the
25 Western Costume Company before accepting the position as a set
26 costumer on John Wayne's famous film, *McClintock*. This led to 14
27 more movie offers with John Wayne, including *True Grit*, *Rio Bravo*,
28 *The Cowboys* and *The Shootist* to name a few. Luster also worked at
29 Disney, MGM, Warner Bros., Universal, Twentieth Century Fox, and
30 many other studios as an independent costumer. His credits
31 included *Mary Poppins*, *That Darn Cat*, *Cheyenne Autumn*, *Telefon*,
32 *Apocalypse Now*, *Comes A Horsemen*, *Conagher*, *Tom Horn* and many
33 others; and

34 WHEREAS, while working at Disney, he met and married Patricia
35 Voght, a marriage that lasted 27 years and blessed them with two
36 daughters, Christy and Diana; and

37 WHEREAS, in 1977, Luster decided to open his own costume
38 company, and United American Costume Corporation was created. The
39 small 10 x 10 storage space has grown over the last 44 years to
40 cover more than 125,000 square feet of wardrobe ranging from 1750
41 - present day; and

42 WHEREAS, as a businessman, he was known to rule with an iron
43 fist yet give someone the shirt off his back, if he was asked. He
44 believed in a day's work for a day's pay and that a man's word was



45 good if he looked you in the eye and shook your hand. He believed
46 in quality rather than the net profit and as Costume Designer on
47 *Tom Horn*, Luster was the first person to independently guarantee
48 the wardrobe budget to include wardrobe and labor supplied by his
49 company for one price. He has been credited for starting the
50 careers of countless Costumers and Costume Designers and providing
51 work for those losing their benefits because they were short on
52 hours. He stood up for his beliefs and stopped shipments to
53 Canada when runaway productions refused to allow American
54 Costumers to work there; and

55 WHEREAS, despite his success, Luster never forgot where he
56 came from. He frequently returned to his hometown of Ruleville,
57 Mississippi, and in the early 1980s, he bought the estate across
58 the street from the Macabee Plantation where he had worked as a
59 child. He was often seen riding his tractor and expressing joy
60 over his cotton and soybean crops. Luster shared his success with
61 his hometown and started a museum there to display movie star
62 wardrobe and memorabilia from some of Hollywood's best actors and
63 films as well as a restaurant and retail clothing store; and

64 WHEREAS, in more recent years, he split his time between Los
65 Angeles and Ruleville. In 2001, he handed the daily operations of
66 his company over to his daughter, Diana. He continued to find joy
67 every day in sharing his life stories to friends and customers and
68 could be spotted frequently on a ladder restocking clothes,



69 helping in a fitting or teaching a new costumer how to shape a
70 hat; and

71 WHEREAS, Luster is survived by his daughters Christy (Steve)
72 Kovacic, Diana (Rodd) Foster; four grandchildren: Samantha,
73 Michelle, Dillon and Katie; two great-grandchildren, Jaxs and Jet;
74 sister Reta (Maurice) Williams; extended family of nephews and
75 nieces; and many friends; and

76 WHEREAS, Luster's impact on the entertainment industry and on
77 his home state will be missed:

78 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
79 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
80 we do hereby mourn the loss and commend the life and public
81 contributions of Luster Bayless of Ruleville, Mississippi,
82 legendary Costumer to John Wayne and Founder of United American
83 Costume Company, and express the sympathy of the Legislature on
84 his passing.

85 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
86 the surviving family of Luster Bayless and be made available to
87 the Capital Press Corps.

