

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 181

Recognizing the sesquicentennial of West Virginia and commemorating its history, people, and culture.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 21, 2013

Mr. ROCKEFELLER (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the sesquicentennial of West Virginia and commemorating its history, people, and culture.

Whereas Alexander Spotswood, Lieutenant Governor of Virginia, led a westward expedition in 1716, claiming land beyond the Allegheny Mountains for King George I;

Whereas early settlement of present-day West Virginia began in the Eastern Panhandle, with development of western areas to follow;

Whereas slave abolitionist John Brown launched an ill-fated raid on a United States arsenal in Harpers Ferry in 1859 and was later convicted of treason, conspiracy, and murder in nearby Charles Town, inflaming anti- and pro-slavery factions in the North and the South;

Whereas citizens in the region opposed the decision of Virginia during the Civil War to secede from the United States;

Whereas West Virginia was admitted to the Union by Congress on June 20, 1863, following a proclamation by President Abraham Lincoln, making it the only State created from the Civil War;

Whereas the bold decision of those first West Virginians resonates today with the words of the official State motto, “Montani Semper Liberi”, meaning “West Virginians Are Always Free”;

Whereas West Virginia is the only state located entirely within the Appalachian Mountains;

Whereas the industries in West Virginia are wedded to its land, supplying 15 percent of the coal in the United States, forging steel, producing timber, and fostering a present-day boom in natural gas production, and to its innovations including burgeoning biometrics and automotive industries;

Whereas the workers of West Virginia are the salt of the earth and set hard work as a cornerstone of a life rich with pride, especially its miners who daily travel deep underground to mine the coal that keeps the United States humming;

Whereas the sense of patriotism in West Virginia runs deep and true, as the State has the highest number of men and women per capita serving the United States in the Armed Forces and a population of veterans wholly dedicated to making sure all who serve are supported;

Whereas the communities in West Virginia exemplify the phrase “neighbor helping neighbor”;

Whereas the awe-inspiring landscapes of the Mountain State grant residents and tourists the chance to climb mountains, fish streams, hunt in forests, raft rapids, and traverse trails, making tourism one of the preeminent economic drivers of the State;

Whereas West Virginia is home to the longest steel arch bridge in the world, the New River Gorge Bridge, which spans 1,815 feet over the New River Canyon, and the highest peak in the State is Spruce Knob, sitting at 4,861 feet above sea level;

Whereas West Virginia has seen important inventions, including the first steamboat, the first iron furnace, the first electric railroad, the first glass plant, and the first pottery plant;

Whereas the heritage of West Virginia can be felt in its handmade creations, from quilts and woodwork to dinnerware and paintings, heard in its mountain music, from hometown jamborees to fiddle-playing on front porches and songs from well-worn hymnals, and enjoyed in its unique cuisine, from pepperoni rolls to wild ramps and buckwheat cakes with sausage;

Whereas many icons hold their roots in West Virginia, from General Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson to Nobel Prize-winning author Pearl S. Buck, educational leader Booker T. Washington, Mother’s Day founder Anna Jarvis, and Brigadier General Charles “Chuck” Yeager; and

Whereas, during a rainy centennial celebration on the front steps of the Capitol of West Virginia in Charleston on June 20, 1963, President John F. Kennedy proclaimed, “The sun does not always shine in West Virginia but the people always do”: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) observes the sesquicentennial of West Vir-
3 ginia; and

4 (2) celebrates the remarkable heritage and con-
5 tributions of the people of West Virginia.

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