

By Representative Spratt

## House Resolution

A resolution honoring philanthropist Kenneth Curtis, of LaBelle.

WHEREAS, growing up in a mining town in upper Michigan where people worked hard and luxuries were scarce, Kenneth Curtis turned down a scholarship from the University of Michigan in 1922 and went to work digging sewer ditches to enable his mother, widowed when Kenneth was 12, to give up her job in a corset factory, and

WHEREAS, all too familiar with circumstances that sometimes force individuals to choose between an education and work, Kenneth Curtis was recently honored for having afforded an opportunity for a broader array of career options to 1,000 teens in a rural community where most people are farmers or ranchers and job opportunities are limited, and

WHEREAS, for more than a decade, through the Isabella Curtis Scholarship program set up as a tribute to his late wife, 96-year-old Kenneth Curtis has paid Edison Community College tuition, book fees, and a \$700 annual travel stipend on behalf of any LaBelle High School graduate with a "C" average or above who desired an education beyond the secondary level, and an endowed scholarship fund guarantees that the program will continue after his death, and

WHEREAS, Kenneth Curtis is a man of simple tastes who has stated that he hasn't bought anything new in dress clothing in 20 years and that his most extravagant past indulgence was smoking a cigar at a burlesque show, until, in 1997, he "got the bug" for a Rolls-Royce and paid \$52,000 for the 1958 midnight blue classic with red interior, from which

1 he derived immense pleasure when he drove it to go fishing,  
2 and

3           WHEREAS, the stir created in LaBelle in 1997 by the  
4 arrival of the Silver Cloud was revived recently when Kenneth  
5 Curtis donated the vintage Rolls to Hope Hospice in Fort  
6 Myers, stipulating only that it be used in some way as a  
7 fundraiser for the organization that provides comfort for  
8 terminally ill patients and their grieving families, NOW,  
9 THEREFORE,

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11 Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of  
12 Florida:

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14           That the House of Representatives pauses in its  
15 deliberations to honor Kenneth Curtis, a man whose generosity  
16 and compassion have brought opportunity, hope, and comfort to  
17 hundreds of Florida residents.

18           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution  
19 be presented to Kenneth Curtis as a tangible token of the  
20 sentiments expressed herein.

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