

1 HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 5

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4
5 A RESOLUTION OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA HONORING THE
6 LIFE AND WORK OF CHARLES S. JOHNSON.

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8 WHEREAS, Charles S. Johnson was born in Montana and dedicated his life to observing,
9 documenting, and explaining the state and its people; and

10 WHEREAS, while the name Charles S. Johnson graced newspaper bylines in the state for nearly half a
11 century over the most important of stories, the dean of Montana journalism always introduced himself as
12 simply, Chuck; and

13 WHEREAS, one of Chuck's first reporting assignments was covering the 1972 Constitutional
14 Convention where he could not believe his good fortune to have a front row seat to history in the making; and

15 WHEREAS, his experience with the building of the state constitution became the cornerstone of
16 Chuck's career as the state's longest-serving statehouse reporter; and

17 WHEREAS, despite his stature and intellect, Chuck never thought he was more important or interesting
18 than anyone he covered. He treated those he encountered with respect and curiosity, be it a U.S. Senator, a
19 governor, or a committee secretary; and

20 WHEREAS, Chuck's grin and gentle demeanor made him approachable to generations of young
21 journalists who quickly learned that he was generous with his time and knowledge, not just for a minute, but for
22 a lifetime. He continued to be a mentor, friend, and cheerleader for them until his last day; and

23 WHEREAS, Chuck saw each day as an opportunity to learn. Most of us eschew change, but Chuck
24 treated life as a developing story. Ink ran in his veins, yet he embraced the opportunity to tell stories in any
25 medium—he found his way into radio, television, and was tweeting gems until the end; and

26 WHEREAS, those who were interviewed by Charles S. Johnson could expect him to offer the benefit of
27 the doubt and exercise fairness, but his loyalty was always anchored to the truth; and

28 WHEREAS, Chuck would note that we buried the lede: He was the best of Montana in all respects. He

1 is missed and remembered.

2

3 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF
4 MONTANA:

5 That Montanans remember Chuck Johnson as a man of integrity, a student of history who sought
6 knowledge daily, and a fearless reporter who pursued truth, justice, and accuracy in the service of the state he
7 loved.

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Montana Legislature is encouraged to commemorate the life of
9 Charles S. Johnson on the capitol grounds where he spent many days and nights finding and telling stories that
10 no one would otherwise know.

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of State send a copy of this resolution to each
12 member of the Montana Congressional Delegation, the Governor, and the presidents of the University of
13 Montana and Montana State University, both of which awarded degrees to Charles S. Johnson.

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of State also send a copy of this resolution to every
15 news outlet in the state, including newspapers, radio stations, television stations, and online publications, as a
16 reminder for journalists to practice the craft the way Charles S. Johnson did: honestly, humbly, and tirelessly to
17 the end.

18 - END -