

ENGROSSED SENATE  
CONCURRENT  
RESOLUTION NO. 17

By: Taylor, Brown, Cain, Campbell,  
Capps, Coffee, Crutchfield,  
Dickerson, Douglass, Dunlap,  
Easley, Fair, Fisher, Ford,  
Haney, Harrison, Helton,  
Henry, Herbert, Hobson,  
Horner, Johnson, Kerr,  
Laughlin, Leftwich,  
Littlefield, Long, Maddox,  
Martin, Mickle, Milacek,  
Monson, Morgan, Muegge, Price,  
Pruitt, Rabon, Robinson,  
Rozell, Shurden, Smith,  
Snyder, Stipe, Weedn,  
Wilcoxson, Wilkerson, Williams  
and Williamson of the Senate

and

Benson of the House

A Concurrent Resolution praising Bob Allen for the enthusiastic manner in which the Oklahoma Educational Television Authority has been developed; honoring Oklahoma Educational Television Authority Executive Director Bob Allen upon the occasion of his retirement; and directing distribution.

WHEREAS, Bob Allen was born in El Reno, Oklahoma. He graduated from El Reno High School in 1957 and from Oklahoma Baptist University in 1962; and

WHEREAS, Bob Allen pursued an acting career in New York City. While in New York, he was employed by one its leading banks as well as in sales and marketing for a major oil company; and

WHEREAS, Bob Allen returned to Oklahoma, became a teacher and speech instructor for the El Reno public schools and a junior college; and

WHEREAS, Bob Allen worked on an Oklahoma Education Association committee with the goal of improving the public image of Oklahoma school teachers. In 1968 while Director of Public Relations for the Oklahoma Education Association he developed a "School Crisis Alert" program to explain the needs of the Oklahoma school teacher; and

WHEREAS, Bob Allen was selected as Director of Communications for the State Department of Education. While there he administered all audio-visual production services of the State Department of Education's presentations and directed the preparation and production of three monthly publications. Bob Allen was appointed to an Oklahoma Educational Television Authority (OETA) planning committee; and

WHEREAS, Bob Allen temporarily took the position of Executive Director of OETA in 1972 when there was difficulty finding an appropriate candidate for the job; and

WHEREAS, Bob Allen was named to the Board of Directors of the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS). He was one of 15 across the nation named to the board from a pool of over 200 public television managers. He has since served on the board of directors of several other national public television associations; and

WHEREAS, when Bob Allen became Executive Director of the Oklahoma Educational Television Authority (OETA) in 1972, the system was operating in a basement of a building at the University of Oklahoma and consisted of two stations— KETA, Channel 13, in Oklahoma City and KOED, Channel 11, in Tulsa. Under the leadership of Bob Allen, Channel 3 was added in Eufaula in 1977 and Channel 12 in Cheyenne in 1978. Fifteen translator facilities in key areas now insure that OETA's broadcast signal reaches the entire state. He also added UHF station KAUT, Channel 43, in Oklahoma City renaming it KTLC, "The Literacy Channel" to broadcast programs for which there was no time on the authority's other stations; and

WHEREAS, when Bob Allen became Executive Director of OETA it broadcast 40 hours a week during the school year and 20-30 hours a week during the summer and had ten full-time employees. OETA now broadcasts 110 hours a week, from 6 a.m. to midnight and has approximately 80 full-time employees; and

WHEREAS, when Bob Allen became Executive Director of OETA, the programming consisted of classroom instruction and a few intellectually oriented programs. Today OETA offers a wide variety of nature, children's, public affairs, comedy, music, cultural, culinary and home-improvement programs. It carries not only high-quality national programming but locally produced programs ranging from Oklahoma history to the development of pop and jazz music in Oklahoma; and

WHEREAS, since OETA first received Nielsen ratings in the late 1970s, its audience has doubled to 1.6 million viewers a week, leading all other state public television networks; and

WHEREAS, when Bob Allen wanted to broadcast old Lawrence Welk shows but discovered that re-broadcasting rights would be too expensive for one state, he syndicated the program in 1987 and began marketing the Lawrence Welk shows for public television stations throughout the nation. Today 275 stations carry the program. Bob Allen has been Executive Producer for six national Lawrence Welk fund-raising specials that have garnered \$15 million in donations for public television; and

WHEREAS, the Oklahoma News Report, a nightly show originated by Bob Allen, provides the only state and local television news available to viewers in remote areas of the state. Despite the high costs of the program, it reaches viewers in distant portions of the state that had previously had no Oklahoma-based news programs; and

WHEREAS, when Bob Allen first became Executive Director of OETA, the annual operating budgeting was \$200,000 from state-appropriated funds. That has grown to an \$8 million annual budget funded from both public and private sources. In 1975 the Corporation for Public Broadcasting was faced with budget cutbacks and asked state networks to raise money. That year OETA viewers donated more than \$100,000. Today some 30,000 viewers contribute \$2 million each year. In the early 1980s, Bob Allen created a nonprofit foundation to raise money

directly from the public. He directs more than \$15 million in capital improvements for the network; and

WHEREAS, when on April 2, 1983, a windstorm destroyed the Oklahoma Educational Television Authority's transmission cable, Bob Allen went to great heights to get the network back on the air. He climbed up the transmission tower and used the publicity as a means to get funding for repairs. He raised \$248,000 of the needed \$218,000, some \$30,000 more than needed; and

WHEREAS, Bob Allen refuses to accept the title "Mr. OETA", noting that he has had an outstanding staff, a supportive board and a loyal viewing public. His current project is the Oklahoma Broadcast Training Center which will serve as a laboratory for those seeking employment in the media. Funding will be forthcoming from both public and private entities; and

WHEREAS, Bob Allen has supplied both the vision and fund-raising necessary to develop the Oklahoma Educational Television Authority, demonstrating his two greatest talents: the vision to see what is potentially possible and the ability to raise the money to make a possibility a reality.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE 1ST SESSION OF THE 47TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN:

THAT the Oklahoma State Legislature praises Bob Allen for the enthusiastic manner in which the Oklahoma Educational Television Authority has been developed.

THAT the Oklahoma State Legislature honors Oklahoma Educational Television Authority Executive Director Bob Allen upon the occasion of his retirement.

THAT a copy of this resolution be distributed to Oklahoma Educational Television Authority Executive Director Bob Allen and his wife, Mary Lee.

Adopted by the Senate the 7th day of April, 1999.

\_\_\_\_\_  
President of the Senate

Adopted by the House of Representatives the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_,  
1999.

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Speaker of the House of  
Representatives