

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 1st Session of the 51st Legislature (2007)

3 SENATE CONCURRENT
4 RESOLUTION 24

By: Sparks of the Senate

and

5 Winchester of the House
6

7
8 AS INTRODUCED

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10 A Concurrent Resolution recognizing the many
11 accomplishments of the Reverend Dick Virtue; thanking
12 him for his efforts; and directing distribution.

13 WHEREAS, Richard Linn Cowan Virtue was born in Yale, Oklahoma,
14 November 7, 1921, the son of C.R., Sr., and Olive (Cowan). He
15 served in the U.S. Air Corps in World War II and later became an
16 insurance executive; and

17 WHEREAS, Reverend Dick Virtue, although now formally retired, is
18 currently an Assisting Priest of Saint John's Episcopal Church in
19 Norman, Oklahoma. Reverend Virtue was ordained a deacon in 1964 and
20 ordained to the Episcopal priesthood on June 22, 1973; and

21 WHEREAS, in 1972 the Norman Alcohol Information Center (NAIC),
22 Center for Oklahoma Alcohol and Drug Services, Inc., was founded by
23 Reverend Virtue. An outpatient counseling service that has, since
24 the date of its inception, treated more than 8,000 people, NAIC

1 named Dick Virtue its first Executive Director, a position he held
2 until his retirement in 2002. This organization, which Reverend
3 Virtue still continues to inspire, was the first agency in Oklahoma
4 to offer treatment of alcoholism as a disease, a major breakthrough
5 in the treatment of alcohol addiction. Today it provides over 18
6 different programs offering a full spectrum of services from
7 prevention to aftercare for clients of all ages. This agency is
8 certified for outpatient services by the Oklahoma Department of
9 Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services; and

10 WHEREAS, in 1997 NAIC marked its 25th anniversary as Oklahoma's
11 first private, nonprofit outpatient agency to fight alcohol and drug
12 abuse. In Senate Resolution Number 17, the Oklahoma State Senate of
13 the First Session of the 46th Oklahoma Legislature congratulated
14 Reverend Dick Virtue on the success of his ministry; and

15 WHEREAS, Reverend Dick Virtue received the 1991 Bishop's Award
16 of the Episcopal diocese of Oklahoma for his work at NAIC and
17 through the Lifeline Program at Joseph Harp Correctional Center in
18 Lexington, Oklahoma. In 1992 Reverend Virtue received the Sam
19 Shoemaker Award from the Board of Directors of the National
20 Episcopal Coalition on Alcohol and Drugs. Oklahoma Governor David
21 Walters declared March 25, 1992, "Reverend Dick Virtue Day in
22 Oklahoma". In 2003 he received the Humanitarian of the Year Award
23 from the City Council of Norman, Oklahoma; and

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1 WHEREAS, also in 2003 Reverend Dick Virtue allied with former
2 State Senator Helen Cole to seek increased funding for substance
3 abuse programs. Together they spearheaded a drive to raise the
4 annual licensing fee for the sale of 3.2 percent alcohol beer from
5 \$10 per year to \$230 in 2006; and

6 WHEREAS, in 2004 Reverend Virtue served on a blue-ribbon task
7 force to examine the costs associated with untreated mental illness,
8 substance abuse, and domestic violence. Reverend Virtue was elected
9 Vice Chair of the Task Force. That same year during Oklahoma
10 Recovery Month he was honored as the recipient of the Lifetime
11 Achievement Award from the Oklahoma Citizen Advocates for Recovery
12 and Treatment Association; and

13 WHEREAS, in 1985, at the request of then Commissioner of the
14 State Department of Human Services Henry Bellmon, Reverend Virtue
15 designed and promoted an Employee Assistance Program, a first for
16 Oklahoma's state employees. Reverend Dick Virtue, a Senate
17 appointee, was a longtime chair of the State Office of Personnel
18 Management's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Advisory Council; and

19 WHEREAS, Reverend Dick Virtue started the first DUI School in
20 the state, providing an effective model that was later adopted
21 state-wide. He persuaded the State Department of Mental Health and
22 Substance Abuse Services to accept family members in its treatment
23 contracts for the first time. He helped found the Oklahoma
24 Association of Alcohol and Alcoholism and cosponsored the state's

1 first conference on alcohol abuse and alcoholism. He also assisted
2 in the development of the state's first alcohol counselor training
3 and certification program. As Chair of the Association's
4 Legislative Committee he drafted legislation to provide for
5 community treatment programs across the state, resulting in the
6 enactment of Senate Bill 280 in 1978.

7 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE 1ST SESSION
8 OF THE 51ST OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
9 CONCURRING THEREIN:

10 THAT the Oklahoma State Legislature recognizes the Reverend Dick
11 Virtue's many accomplishments and contributions to the people of the
12 State of Oklahoma, especially for those who suffer the anguish of
13 addiction.

14 THAT the Oklahoma State Legislature thanks the Reverend Dick
15 Virtue for his outstanding efforts and challenging work on behalf of
16 his fellow Oklahomans.

17 THAT a copy of this resolution be distributed to the Reverend
18 Dick Virtue.

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