

House Resolution 948

By: Representative Williamson of the 115th

A RESOLUTION

1 Commending and congratulating William Dewitt Watkins for his courage, kindness, and
2 continued ascent to greatness; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, William Dewitt Watkins was born November 25, 1997, with no complications,
4 beginning multiple therapies at around six months of age, and initiating his education at
5 Walton County Crossroads at the early age of three due to being nonverbal; and

6 WHEREAS, in the summer of 2004, at the age of six years old, he had made intermediate
7 progress in overcoming his nonverbal condition, and it was then he was diagnosed with
8 autism; and

9 WHEREAS, in July of 2005, William had a one-time febrile seizure that resulted in him not
10 breathing for approximately 15 minutes. He was taken to an emergency room where doctors
11 performed a spinal tap on his unconscious body; however, by prayer, and the miraculous
12 touch of God, William survived without brain damage. Miraculously, William, at the age
13 of eight, began to speak after this incident; and

14 WHEREAS, the next five years were intense for William; however, he still achieved many
15 accomplishments and managed to teach himself the dance choreography of each Michael
16 Jackson music video. He had barely begun learning to speak, but it was apparent he had a
17 natural skill and affinity for music; and

18 WHEREAS, he began attending Walnut Grove High School in 2012, and because of his
19 talents was enrolled in the Fundamentals Drama class. In 2013, he starred in his first play,
20 titled "Don't Say MacBeth," in which he played Injured McDuff; and

21 WHEREAS, in 2015, he starred in his second play, titled "Game of Tiaras," in which he was
22 a sensational highlight of the show in his role as "the Animated Snowman." He thrived in

23 the spotlight, excelling in the loud chaotic setting, maintaining his composure, and dazzling
24 with his performance; and

25 WHEREAS, in the fall of 2016, William auditioned for his first musical, the "Addams
26 Family Musical," to be performed in the spring of 2017. He got the role of the Addams
27 Family ancestor, the Newsboy. William was slightly overwhelmed by the singing and
28 dancing but managed to overcome his fear to deliver a riveting performance; and

29 WHEREAS, he attended his first banquet to be honored for his achievements in May of 2017
30 when he was inducted into the International Thespian Society; and

31 WHEREAS, William will graduate from high school in May of 2018 with a regular diploma
32 despite his disability, an accomplishment of true heroism; and

33 WHEREAS, he loves and treasures the United States of America, and his story inspires all
34 who hear it never to give up; and

35 WHEREAS, even though he couldn't speak, he found a way to let his voice be heard in the
36 world.

37 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
38 the members of this body commend and congratulate William Dewitt Watkins for his
39 courage, kindness, and heroism and extend best wishes for his continued growth and success.

40 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
41 and directed to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to
42 William Dewitt Watkins and his mother, Devonna Casson.