

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION HONORING THE
LIFE AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF LARRY H.
MILLER

2009 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

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LONG TITLE

General Description:

This concurrent resolution of the Legislature and the Governor honors the life and legacy of Larry H. Miller.

Highlighted Provisions:

37 This resolution:

38 ▶ honors the life and legacy of Larry H. Miller, patriot, entrepreneur, philanthropist,
39 owner of the Utah Jazz and other sports teams, automobile dealership owner,
40 community advocate, humanitarian, husband, father, grandfather,
41 great-grandfather, and friend.

42 **Special Clauses:**

43 None



45 *Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein:*

46 WHEREAS, Larry H. Miller was born on April 26, 1944;

47 WHEREAS, Mr. Miller graduated from West High School in 1962;

48 WHEREAS, after high school graduation Mr. Miller worked construction and played
49 fast pitch softball but it was his interest in drag car racing that led him to the auto industry;

50 WHEREAS, Mr. Miller married his high school sweetheart, Karen Gail Saxton, on
51 March 25, 1965;

52 WHEREAS, in 1966, Mr. Miller became a parts manager for a Utah auto dealer, then
53 moved to Denver in 1970 where he also worked as a parts department manager at a Toyota
54 dealership, was promoted to general manager of that dealership, and in a short time was
55 promoted to manage six dealerships owned and operated by Chuck Stevenson;

56 WHEREAS, on May 1, 1979, he and his uncle opened Larry H. Miller Toyota in
57 Murray, Utah;

58 WHEREAS, throughout the 1980s and 1990s he acquired a number of other
59 automobile dealerships in Utah, Colorado, Arizona, Idaho, Oregon, and New Mexico;

60 WHEREAS, Mr. Miller developed an intimate understanding of our nation's founders
61 and the principles in which they believed and was a tireless advocate for individual liberty,
62 limited government, and the free enterprise system;

63 WHEREAS, as a dynamic entrepreneur and business leader, Mr. Miller amassed more
64 than 80 businesses and properties in the western United States, most notably the Utah Jazz,

65 Energy Solutions Arena, the Salt Lake Bees, Miller Motorsports Park, Megaplex Theatres, and
66 39 automobile dealerships spanning the Rocky Mountain West;

67 WHEREAS, Mr. Miller also developed vast real estate holdings, including commercial
68 and agricultural properties;

69 WHEREAS, Mr. Miller purchased a half interest in the Utah Jazz professional
70 basketball team on April 11, 1985;

71 WHEREAS, one year later he blocked the move of the team to Minnesota by buying
72 the remaining interest in the Jazz;

73 WHEREAS, Mr. Miller was instrumental in drafting future hall of fame players Karl
74 Malone and John Stockton and built his franchise around them, along with the grit of coach
75 Jerry Sloan;

76 WHEREAS, Mr. Miller and city leaders broke ground on what would become the Delta
77 Center on May 22, 1990;

78 WHEREAS, Mr. Miller privately financed most of the arena's \$66 million price tag;

79 WHEREAS, the arena was completed on schedule on October 4, 1991;

80 WHEREAS, the 2008-09 National Basketball Association season marked Mr. Miller's
81 24th year as owner of the Jazz, a franchise that has grown considerably and become a winner
82 both on and off the court under his ownership;

83 WHEREAS, Mr. Miller's unwavering personal commitment to professional sports in
84 Salt Lake City created the foundation for a strong franchise in one of the league's smallest
85 markets and was rewarded with achievements such as consecutive trips to the NBA finals in
86 1997 and 1998 and hosting the NBA All-Star Game in 1993;

87 WHEREAS, in 1993, Mr. Miller purchased the Salt Lake independent television
88 station, KJZZ-TV;

89 WHEREAS, in 1999, Mr. Miller entered the movie theater and restaurant business,
90 developing the Jordan Commons complex in Sandy;

91 WHEREAS, in 2001, Mr. Miller agreed to manage the Gateway Theatre complex in
92 downtown Salt Lake City, and added to his theater business in the fall of 2004 when he took

93 over the movie complex at Thanksgiving Point in Lehi, Utah, and then again with the opening
94 of the Megaplex 13 in Ogden, Utah in the summer of 2007;

95 WHEREAS, Mr. Miller's sports interests expanded as he acquired the Salt Lake Bees, a
96 minor league team in the Anaheim Angels baseball organization, and built the Miller Motor
97 Sports Park, located 30 minutes west of Salt Lake City in Tooele County, which is the longest
98 and widest road-course style racetrack in the United States;

99 WHEREAS, during his lifetime, Mr. Miller received awards from Sports Illustrated
100 and the American Import Auto Dealers Association and honorary doctorate degrees from the
101 University of Utah, Weber State University, Salt Lake Community College, and Utah Valley
102 State College;

103 WHEREAS, Mr. Miller was named Utah's 1997 Master Entrepreneur of the Year,
104 received the Salt Lake Chamber Giant In Our City award in 2007, was named Salt Lake
105 Tribune 2008 Utahn of the Year, and has received numerous other honors from business,
106 civic, and non-profit organizations;

107 WHEREAS, during his lifetime, Mr. Miller had an enormous impact for good on Utah
108 and its people, not just through his sports franchises but also through his businesses and his
109 entrepreneurial efforts which currently employ over 7,000 individuals;

110 WHEREAS, Larry H. Miller Charities, a foundation funded by monthly contributions
111 from his businesses, fundraising events in the community, and personal donations from
112 employees, has donated millions of dollars to communities in which Mr. Miller does business;

113 WHEREAS, Mr. Miller felt the Utah community was a place where he could do good
114 things, spent his life making things better wherever he went, and was grateful that he could
115 have a positive influence;

116 WHEREAS, Mr. Miller's positive perspective on life allowed him to push his personal
117 limits to succeed;

118 WHEREAS, Mr. Miller was a natural leader, and even the day prior to his passing he
119 was teaching and leading;

120 WHEREAS, Mr. Miller did not want his legacy to be so much about business and

121 commercial ventures but about what he did to help make the world a little better than he found
122 it, such as creating quality jobs and promoting higher education;

123 WHEREAS, Mr. Miller and his wife, Gail, provided close to 300 college scholarships
124 each year and have performed countless other acts of charity without the knowledge or fanfare
125 of the public eye;

126 WHEREAS, Mr. Miller felt that these would create opportunities for people, who could
127 then reach out and hopefully take their turn in making life better for others;

128 WHEREAS, Larry and Gail also donated millions of dollars to Utah-based colleges and
129 universities for campus improvements such as the state-of-the-art softball and baseball
130 complexes at BYU, and the Larry H. Miller Campus of the Salt Lake Community College,
131 including the Larry H. Miller Entrepreneurship Training Center and the Larry and Gail Miller
132 Public Safety Education & Training Center;

133 WHEREAS, Mr. Miller's children fondly recall the activities they shared with him,
134 including his car racing, fishing at the family ranch in Idaho, and family vacations to southern
135 Utah;

136 WHEREAS, the opening of the Delta Center, now Energy Solutions Arena, was a
137 singular moment for Mr. Miller because there were a lot of people that thought the project
138 either shouldn't happen or couldn't happen;

139 WHEREAS, one night during a snowstorm more than a decade ago, Mr. Miller
140 suggested to his family that they get in their 1985 land cruiser and help those who had slid off
141 the road, and they did just that;

142 WHEREAS, Mr. Miller treated everyone the same; he loved people, it was the
143 hallmark of his character, and he instilled it in his children and his grandchildren;

144 WHEREAS, Mr. Miller wanted to do good things and coined the phrase, "Go about
145 doing good until there is too much good in the world";

146 WHEREAS, Mr. Miller was always preparing for the future, setting goals, defining
147 roles, transferring legacies and responsibilities, and teaching everywhere he went;

148 WHEREAS, Mr. Miller taught his children that he and his family were simply stewards

149 of the businesses, influence, cars, and buildings that he acquired and that his turn had come
150 and gone and now it was the next generation's turn;

151 WHEREAS, the way Mr. Miller worked, thought, and dealt with people inspired many
152 to greater accomplishments;

153 WHEREAS, Mr. Miller was passionate about his membership in the Church of Jesus
154 Christ of Latter-day Saints and was continually trying to learn from his endeavors;

155 WHEREAS, Mr. Miller faced tremendous health challenges during the last six months
156 of his life;

157 WHEREAS, close to death on multiple occasions, Mr. Miller fought courageously
158 under extremely difficult circumstances;

159 WHEREAS, Mr. Miller was able to come to terms with his illness in his own mind
160 before passing away at home, overlooking the city that he loved, surrounded by people that he
161 loved, in an atmosphere of peace;

162 WHEREAS, Mr. Miller's family expressed appreciation to the media for addressing his
163 passing with professionalism and sensitivity and for recognizing the importance of the family's
164 privacy and time together;

165 WHEREAS, Mr. Miller leaves behind a profound professional and personal legacy,
166 and the entities he created have had a significant and lasting impact on the communities in
167 which he did business and the more than 7,000 individuals he employed;

168 WHEREAS, Mr. Miller was full of strength, vision, character, and a desire to do good
169 things, and wore himself out doing them:

170 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the
171 Governor concurring therein, honor the life and legacy of Larry H. Miller, patriot,
172 entrepreneur, philanthropist, owner of the Utah Jazz and other sports teams, automobile
173 dealership owner, husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and friend.

174 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor express their
175 sincerest condolences to the Larry H. Miller family at this time of great loss.

176 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to Larry Miller's

177 wife Gail, and to his children Greg, Roger, Stephen, Karen, and Bryan.