

Reps. Pearce, Accavitti, Ball, Bieda, Booher, Condino, Constan, Dean, Hammel, Hammon, Hopgood, Rick Jones, LaJoy, LeBlanc, Leland, Lemmons, Mayes, Meekhof, Opsommer, Polidori, Proos, Sak, Stahl, Steil, Tobocman, Vagnozzi, Hansen, Nitz, Rocca, Alma Smith and Lahti offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 363.

A resolution commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Hush Puppies shoe brand with its headquarters located in Rockford, Michigan.

Whereas, In 1958 the world became a little more relaxed as Hush Puppies created the first casual shoe; and

Whereas, The Hush Puppies trademark was registered on July 1, 1958, and soon thereafter, the soft-eyed basset hound would become its logo and grace millions of shoes, boxes, ads and displays; and

Whereas, Reaction to the new Hush Puppies brand was immediate and overwhelming that by mid-1959 the company had produced its first million pairs of shoes and by 1963 one-in-ten adults in the United States owned a pair; and

Whereas, It did not take long for the brand to obtain celebrity recognition as it was donned by well-known actors, singers, politicians and royalty. Warren Beatty, Perry Como and the “Rat Pack” found them as early as 1959. Hush Puppies became the look for the swingin’ set and were advertised on the Tonight Show with its new host, Johnny Carson. Also on a 1959 visit to the United States, Prince Phillip wore Hush Puppies and two years later the brand came out with a women’s line of shoes for Queen Elizabeth; and

Whereas, Hush Puppies’ global reach began in 1959 when Canada became the first Hush Puppies international licensee. Global partners grew to include the United Kingdom in 1962, South Africa in 1963, Australia in 1964 and Japan in 1965. By 1980 the brand was established throughout South and Central America. Year by year and country by country the world grew more casual with Hush Puppies. By 1990 Hush Puppies become so popular that Mikhail Gorbachev invited the brand to become the first American company to manufacture and sell footwear in the Soviet Union. In 2006, nearly 19 million pairs of Hush Puppies shoes were sold in 136 countries around the globe; and

Whereas, Hush Puppies has also been a leader in footwear technology, in the 1980’s they combined “computer modeling, biomechanical design and state of the art shoe crafting” to introduce the Hush Puppies “Body Shoe” and ushered in the walking shoe era; and

Whereas, Through working in conjunction with Michigan State University Biomechanics Evaluation Laboratory, Bounce technology was created and patented in 1990. Bounce technology allows the outsoles to “absorb the shock of walking impact while gently moving you forward through your step.” Bounce technology remains a cornerstone of Hush Puppies product development; and

Whereas, Hush Puppies has received prominent advertising awards and has been featured in movies from *Forrest Gump* to *Austin Powers*; and

Whereas, In the mid 1990’s a relaxing of the corporate dress standards led to the creation of “casual” work days and “business casual” attire. And Hush Puppies – the brand that “invented casual” was there. When IBM and Ford announced “casual days,” Hush Puppies ran full page congratulatory ads in *USA Today* and *The Wall Street Journal*; and

Whereas, Hush Puppies has remained casual while becoming a worldwide fashion accessory leader; and

Whereas, Casual style, an original idea that was born fifty years ago, continues to inspire the world today; and

Whereas, Hush Puppies has been an excellent corporate citizen throughout West Michigan and the entire state; and

Whereas, They have been a stable economic force employing many Michigan citizens; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That Hush Puppies is commemorated on the 50th anniversary of bringing casual and comfort to a brand of shoes that has journeyed around the world.