

1999 ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION 44

April 9, 1999 – Introduced by Representatives SHERMAN, BOYLE, MUSSER, COGGS, BLACK, LA FAVE, HUBER, YOUNG, MILLER, RYBA, TURNER, PLOUFF, BERCEAU and RICHARDS, cosponsored by Senators JAUCH, BURKE and CLAUSING. Referred to Committee on Rules.

1 **Relating to:** the life and service to the people of the state of Wisconsin of Walter
2 Bresette.

3 Whereas, Walter Bresette died on February 21, 1999, at the age of 51; and

4 Whereas, Walter distinguished himself in many ways. He was an artist,
5 teacher and well-known public speaker. He was a Vietnam veteran. However, it was
6 as a leader on 2 significant issues that he was best known; and

7 Whereas, Walter was one of the state of Wisconsin's most progressive leaders
8 on issues of environmental stewardship. He translated the traditional respect of his
9 own Anishinabe people for the earth into modern and forward-looking ideas for
10 protecting the future of all people. He founded the Lake Superior Greens and was
11 instrumental in founding the Wisconsin Green Party. He proposed the 7th
12 Generation Amendment to the Wisconsin Constitution, which would have written
13 into law a stewardship of the environment; and

14 Whereas, Walter was also a strong voice for human rights for all people, and in
15 particular the indigenous people of Wisconsin. He founded the Midwest Treaty

1 Network and Anishinabe Niiji, both of which were dedicated to bringing forward the
2 need for respect for the sovereignty of the Wisconsin tribes; and

3 Whereas, although he was a forceful advocate, Walter was particularly effective
4 at bringing people together and defusing situations of potential violence. During the
5 confrontations over spear fishing in Northern Wisconsin, it was Walter Bresette who
6 founded Witness for Nonviolence, which trained and organized volunteers to go to
7 the boat landings and work with established peace-keeping methods to diffuse
8 tension and avert violence. Without his efforts, the potential for violence in this
9 bitter dispute would have been much greater; and

10 Whereas, Walter Bresette was a natural leader who led by example and will.
11 He was a talented and creative man who dedicated his life to the betterment of the
12 natural and human environment in his community. Even those who disagreed
13 strongly with his views respected him for the manner in which he conducted himself.
14 Everyone who lives in the Lake Superior watershed area is indebted to Walter for his
15 tireless efforts; and

16 Whereas, Walter Bresette was born on the 4th of July, 1947, in Hayward,
17 Wisconsin and graduated from Bayfield High School in 1964. He served in the
18 United States Army for 4 years, after which he attended the Chicago School of Art.
19 He is survived by 4 children, and all of the rest of us; now, therefore, be it

20 ***Resolved by the assembly, the senate concurring, That*** the members of the
21 Wisconsin legislature commend the service Walter Bresette gave to this state,
22 express their sorrow at his death and extend condolences to his family and friends;
23 and, be it further

