

Chapter No. 2071
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SENATE
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
No. 505

Originated in Senate Liz Welch Secretary

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 505

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION MOURNING THE LOSS AND COMMENDING THE PHILANTHROPY AND CIVIC LEADERSHIP OF FORMER STATE SENATOR JOHN T. KEETON, JR., OF GRENADA, MISSISSIPPI, AND EXPRESSING THE SYMPATHY OF THE LEGISLATURE ON HIS PASSING.

WHEREAS, John T. Keeton, Jr., 89, former Mississippi State Senator, retired attorney, civic leader and respected businessman, passed away on December 26, 2012. The Legislature and the State of Mississippi has lost a wonderful friend, former colleague, gentleman and enlightened lawmaker. Senator Keeton was a banker and an expert on banking legislation; and

WHEREAS, former State Senator, philanthropist and attorney, John Keeton was remembered as a pillar of Grenada among his friends and business associates. "He was a rare jewel, faithful to the Lord and to his fellow man," said Circuit Clerk Linda Barnette, who was also a fellow member with Keeton at First Baptist Church, where he was a longtime Sunday School Teacher and Deacon. Keeton was also a longtime Rotary Club member. "He was a gracious and wonderful man and had the best sense of humor"; and

WHEREAS, a graduate of Grenada High School, Keeton served as a bombardier in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II. He graduated from the University of Mississippi in 1945. In 1950, Keeton became the first President of the Grenada Chamber of Commerce. At age 26, he was the youngest ever to hold the position; and

WHEREAS, he served Grenada as State Senator from 1984-1994, and was a respected member of the Senate leadership under Lieutenant Governor Brad Dye; and

WHEREAS, "He was an early board member of Grenada Lake Medical Center. He was a legend in his own time," said GLMC Director of Administration Chip Denton. John and his wife Margaret were named Citizens of the Year by readers of the *GrenadaStar* in 2012. The couple donated more than \$1.5 Million and at least 1,000 acres of timber to the University of Mississippi. Their service is also recognized with the Keeton Room at the Holmes Community College Grenada campus. "He certainly was a generous man," said Mayor Billy Collins, noting that in 2007, to save it from destruction, the Keetons purchased the former Masonic Temple in downtown Grenada and donated it to the city. The temple has been renamed the John and Margaret Keeton Community Arts Center and is currently under renovation. Denton perhaps summed up Keeton's life best; and

WHEREAS, "John and Margaret Keeton built a remarkable legacy to the University of Mississippi over many years, contributing

time and resources to their immediate community, as well as to the larger community that encompasses the state and beyond," said former Chancellor Robert Khayat. "Their gifts to academics and athletics total some \$1.5 Million, and they made a gift of 1,324 acres of timberland located primarily in Grenada County. Half of the gift is to benefit Ole Miss, with the remainder designated for other local charitable organizations. The Keetons invested in the life of the University of Mississippi and in the lives of young people with their generous gifts, and we are profoundly grateful. This demonstrates their unwavering commitment to strengthening this university and providing opportunities for others. John and Margaret Keeton are great Ole Miss people with a keen understanding of the need for academic and athletic financial support"; and

WHEREAS, survivors include his wife Margaret, son Roy (Nancy), four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, John Keeton was one of the most admired and respected members of the Mississippi State Senate. He had the presence of a gentleman and was soft-spoken. He excelled in a variety of major responsibilities and served the Senate, his constituents and the State of Mississippi exceptionally well. John's public service was exemplified by fairness and sound judgment, and he set the highest standard as a leader in the Mississippi Senate and as a friend; and it is with sadness that we pay tribute and cherish fondly the memory of this most public

spirited citizen of Mississippi whose enormous civic energy will be missed:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby mourn the loss and commend the philanthropy and civic leadership of former State Senator John T. Keeton of Grenada, Mississippi, and express to his family the sympathy of the Legislature on his passing and our thanks for sharing John with the State of Mississippi.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to the family of John Keeton and made available to the Grenada Chamber of Commerce, and made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
January 10, 2013



PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
January 15, 2013



SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES