Chapter No. 2064
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CB / LL

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION No. 99

Originated in House _____ Clerk

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 99

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE ESTEEMED AND LAUDABLE LEGISLATIVE CAREER AND PUBLIC SERVICE OF THE MOST HONORABLE AND DISTINGUISHED GENTLEMAN FROM HARRISON, THE "IRONMAN," "DEAN" AND "GODFATHER" OF THE MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE, SENATOR THOMAS ARLIN "TOMMY" GOLLOTT, UPON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE MISSISSIPPI SENATE.

WHEREAS, like Cy Young's 749 complete baseball games pitched, Wilt Chamberlain's 100-point basketball game and Cal Ripken, Jr.'s, 2,632 consecutive baseball games played, so too may the record of the "Ironman," "Dean" and "Godfather" of the Mississippi Legislature, all of which he is commonly referred, Senator Thomas Arlin "Tommy" Gollott stands as the mace bearer of legislative longevity, with 52 years of uninterrupted service as a member of the Mississippi Legislature, having served in both the House of Representatives and the Senate; and

WHEREAS, the honorable and distinguished Gentleman from Harrison, Senator Thomas Arlin "Tommy" Gollott has announced his plans for retirement from the Mississippi Senate at the conclusion of the 2019 Regular Session of the Mississippi Legislature, after

tirelessly working on behalf of the citizens of Mississippi, former House District 45 and current Senate District 50, both situated in Harrison County from the historical and majestically aesthetic, hallowed halls and ornate chambers of the Mississippi State Capitol Building; and

WHEREAS, before assuming his first seat as a State Legislator elected to the Mississippi House of Representatives from District 45 in 1967, Tommy Gollott, a graduate of the Jefferson Davis Junior College, State College of Arkansas and the University of Southern Mississippi, a former Amateur Athletic Union boxing champ and organizer of the Happy Days Youth Boxing Club, was a savvy businessman, as the owner and operator of the successful AAA Transfer and Storage Company on the Mississippi Gulf Coast; and

WHEREAS, upon being sworn into office in July 1968 at 32 years of age, Tommy Gollott became the distinguished Gentleman from Harrison and wasted no time requesting the legislation, amendments and reports that would help effectuate into law the ideologies and policy changes that his constituents had elected him to further, and unbeknownst to him at the time, charting the course to surpass the legislative record for longest tenure established by former Speaker of the House Walter Sillers, Jr., who had served 50 consecutive years at the time of his passing on September 24, 1966, a record that Gollott would surpass on September 25, 2017; and

WHEREAS, for 12 years, Tommy Gollott's presence and impact as a Democratic member of the House of Representatives was as far reaching as his heart for the Gulf Coast and helping people is big, as he championed legislation that would serve as a precursory catalyst of the coastal tourism expansion, including being instrumental in the building of the Mississippi Gulf Coast Coliseum and Convention Center, the South Mississippi Retardation Center in Long Beach, the purchase and preservation of 35,000 acres of the Pascagoula River System; and

WHEREAS, at the beginning of the 1980 Regular Session of the Mississippi Legislature, former Representative Gollott assumed a new title as Senator Gollott, and operating in said capacity for the past 40 years, he has continued to serve as a bastion of hope for the promotion of Mississippi's economic sector and continued protection for the state's most vulnerable citizens, children with intellectual and developmental impairments; and

WHEREAS, described by his daughter as a "bulldog at the Legislature, but a compassionate, fun and disciplinarian as a father" for whom they are appreciative, Senator Gollott continues to maintain a keen eye on the promises of his native Biloxi's future, as he adamantly maintains that he does not believe in partisan politics, having gone on record as stating, "It shouldn't be partisan; we need cooperation"; and

WHEREAS, as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Ports and Marine Resources, Senator Gollott was a key player in turning a

small bureau under the umbrella of the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks into a separate agency now known as the Department of Marine Resources in 1994, as well as being credited with legislation authorizing dockside gaming in the early 1990s, which gave rise to a tourism and economic boom on the Mississippi Gulf Coast and other areas of the state; and

WHEREAS, former President Pro Tempore of the Mississippi Senate from 1996 to 2000, Senator Gollott's ascension to the ranks of power began with key positions on various legislative committees throughout the course of his five-decade tenure, including: Appropriations, Economic Development, Elections, Highways and Transportation, Local and Private, Rules, Tourism, and as chairman of both the Ports and Marine Resources Committee and the Joint Legislative Committee on Performance, Evaluation and Expenditure Review (PEER); and

WHEREAS, the Senator's love and deeply felt respect for the Legislature as a laboratory of democracy has led his fight to preserve and nurture its integrity for all legislators who equally hold a lion's share in the stake of advancing the direction of the state's economic, educational and political climate; and

WHEREAS, not one to limit his community involvement to the Legislature, Senator Gollott has always been active in his district and dedicated to improving the quality of life for all citizens, as evidenced by his service with the following: Gulf Coast Movers Association; National Movers Conference of America;

National Defense Transportation Association; life member of the National Society of State Legislators; Jaycee; Chamber of Commerce; Boys and Girls Club; Mental Health and Retardation for Harrison County; Knights of Columbus; Fleur De Lis Society; Gulf Coast Hunting and Fishing; board member of Cheshire Home for Handicapped; board member of Mississippi Arts Fair for Handicapped; and Biloxi Elks Club; and

WHEREAS, the members of the Mississippi Legislature will cherish the bond and common goals for the betterment of this great state shared with the Honorable Senator Thomas Arlin "Tommy" Gollott, and that his impeccable service was unparalleled to the Mississippi Legislature and to the constituents of Senate District 50; and

WHEREAS, Senator Gollott has led and continues to lead a life of bravery in the face of challenge, sincerity in the face of apathy and honesty in the presence of deceit, and through it all, this remarkable person has remained a phenomenal gentleman, grounded in his integrity, who seeks to improve the lives of others through positive example, hard work and the undeniable truths of the Word of God; and

WHEREAS, the service of Senator Gollott would be without honor but for the continued support, encouragement and love of his family, who have endured the daunting struggles that accompany the life of an elected official, and much credit is also due to his loved ones who have sacrificed countless hours without him in

order to allow him to fulfill his legislative obligations, including: his wife, Zelma Jackson Gollott; daughters, Tanya Gollott Swoope, Lisa Gollott Lane and Jennifer Gollott Burke; and his grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to honor the indelible legacy of remarkable service of our colleague and friend, Senator Tommy Gollott, whose service to the State of Mississippi and this body abounds with honor and intrepid dignity:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby commend the esteemed and laudable legislative career and public service of the most honorable, distinguished and senior Gentleman from Harrison, Senator Thomas Arlin "Tommy" Gollott, and express fondest respect and best wishes for continued success in all of his future endeavors as he enjoys the lighter years of life after his legislative retirement.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be furnished to Senator Thomas Arlin "Tommy" Gollott and to the members of the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
March 22, 2019.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
March 27, 2019

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE