### SLS 12RS-1548

### **ORIGINAL**

Regular Session, 2012

# SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 44

BY SENATOR MORRELL

COMMENDATIONS. Commends Ashton Phelps Jr. upon his retirement as publisher of the New Orleans Times-Picayune.

1	A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
2	To commend and congratulate Ashton Phelps Jr. upon his retirement as publisher of the
3	New Orleans Times-Picayune and as president of The Times-Picayune Publishing
4	Corporation and for his many contributions made to the state of Louisiana.
5	WHEREAS, it is altogether fitting and proper that the Legislature of Louisiana
6	acknowledges Mr. Phelps' thirty-three years of superb leadership and outstanding journalism
7	while at the helm of The Times-Picayune, a publication with local, national, and
8	international circulation; and
9	WHEREAS, since 1979, Ashton Phelps has been at the top rung of the publishing
10	giant and during its 175 year history, his family has been associated with the newspaper for
11	five generations; his great-grandfather and father were also publishers with the paper; and
12	WHEREAS, Mr. Phelps attributes the success of this daily publication to the loyalty
13	of its readership, its advertisers, its faithful, talented, and capable employees, and the
14	steadfast support of its owners, the Newhouse family; and
15	WHEREAS, as publisher, Ashton Phelps adopted new strategies that changed its
16	focus and operation to better reflect the demands of a diverse metropolitan landscape, with
17	the expansion of Internet access and digital media, such as NOLA.com, to keep pace in the
18	challenging realm of telecommunications; and

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1	WHEREAS, he expanded all of the bureaus to enhance the individuality of the local
2	news in suburban centers, such as Algiers, New Orleans East, Harahan, Gretna, Kenner,
3	Lakefront, Marrero, Metairie, Midtown, Uptown, Westwego, the River Parishes, St. Bernard,
4	and north of Lake Pontchartrain to include Covington, Mandeville, and Slidell; and
5	WHEREAS, his creativity and dedication have resulted in a constant Number One
6	national ranking among publications in its market demographic; and
7	WHEREAS, in 1992, at his alma mater, Tulane University Law School, the Phelps
8	Lecture Series was established to honor the legacy of his father, Ashton Phelps Sr. and
9	remains dedicated to the application and preservation of First Amendment rights and related
10	fields of constitutional law; and
11	WHEREAS, during his tenure, The Times-Picayune garnered four Pulitzer Prizes,
12	in 1997, one Pulitzer for "Oceans of Trouble", an analysis of the threatened global fish
13	supply and a second for editorial cartooning; in 2005, receipt of a Pulitzer for news coverage
14	during Hurricane Katrina, plus the George Polk Award for Metropolitan Reporting, as well
15	as two more Pulitzer Prizes in 2006; and
16	WHEREAS, for over three decades, Ashton Phelps has handled high-profile stories
17	and editorial topics with quiet aplomb; however, Mr. Phelps, The Times-Picayune, and the
18	city of New Orleans itself, will forever be defined by the events of August 2005, and the
19	aftermath that continues to this day, when Hurricane Katrina knocked the city to its knees;
20	and
21	WHEREAS, Ashton Phelps, along with reporters and employees, remained in place
22	for forty-eight hours to capture many of the historic details in images and print and to
23	continue to report the news during this catastrophe, a precious touchstone for a region in
24	perilous straits; evacuated to Baton Rouge in the back of delivery trucks, The
25	Times-Picayune personnel maintained a continuous stream of vital information, either via
26	Internet or publications temporarily printed in Baton Rouge, until six weeks later, when the
27	Howard Avenue presses rolled again; Times-Picayune was one of the first businesses to

28 resume operations; and

WHEREAS, the population of the city of New Orleans and the state of Louisiana
owe a debt of gratitude to Ashton Phelps for his years of leadership as publisher of the

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New Orleans Times-Picayune, for his many contributions to the betterment of this state, and
 his continued efforts to preserve America's First Amendment rights of freedom of speech
 and of the press.

4 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby 5 commend and congratulate Ashton Phelps Jr. upon his retirement as publisher of the 6 New Orleans Times-Picayune and as president of The Times-Picayune Publishing 7 Corporation.

- 8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby wish
- 9 for him continued success in his future endeavors.
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to
  Ashton Phelps Jr.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Suzi Montague.

## DIGEST

SCR No.

Commends Ashton Phelps Jr. publisher of the New Orleans Times-Picayune, upon his retirement from the newspaper.