

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 49

BY SENATOR PEACOCK

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To express the sincere condolences of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the death of Lou Gehrig Burnett of Shreveport, Louisiana, and to note his exceptional career as an accomplished journalist and political pundit.

WHEREAS, it is with deep remorse that the Legislature of Louisiana has learned of the passing of Lou Gehrig Burnett, who as the publisher of Fax-Net Update, provided an online weekly analysis of local, state, and national issues to northwest Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, for five decades Lou Gehrig Burnett advanced the profession of journalism as a successful writer, political analyst, editor, and publisher; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Burnett was also the senior political columnist for The Forum News, a regular panelist on radio and the Comcast Cable broadcast, "Dateline Shreveport", the political analyst for several local television stations including KSLA-TV, Channel 12, and a contributor to The Bossier Press-Tribune; and

WHEREAS, born in Houma, Louisiana, Lou Gehrig Burnett displayed an innate ability for literary expression at an early age; he began his journalism career as editor of his grade school newspaper; he continued honing his writing skills while in high school as sports editor for the Houma Courier and he was the youngest newspaper editor in the state at that time; and

WHEREAS, matriculating at Nicholls State College, Burnett was the first sophomore to be named editor of its newspaper, the Nicholls Worth, and was elected Terrebonne Parish Representative on the Student Government Association; after two years of study, he then transferred to LSU to pursue a journalism major, where he advanced to become sports editor, managing editor, and eventually editor-in-chief of The Daily Reveille; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Burnett garnered both an undergraduate degree in journalism with minors in English and sociology and a master's degree while at LSU during the 1960s; those were the "salad days" of pen and paper, and mastery of changing a typewriter ribbon; and

WHEREAS, the exceptional academic accomplishments of Mr. Burnett resulted in a recommendation by Frank Price, LSU dean of journalism, that afforded him entrance into the rarefied domain of Washington, D.C. political circles as press secretary and confidante to Louisiana Congressman F. Edward Hebert of New Orleans, a position he held from 1966 until Hebert's retirement in 1977; and

WHEREAS, for sixteen years, Mr. Burnett acted as chief-of-staff for Congressman Jerry Huckaby of Minden; Burnett then served as chief adviser and oversaw the operations of the Washington office and two district offices in the Louisiana Fifth Congressional District; and

WHEREAS, after twenty-seven years on Capitol Hill, Lou Gehrig Burnett settled in Shreveport in 1993 and continued to pursue his true vocation as a journalist by writing political columns for local news media and also serving a two-year stint as executive assistant to Mayor Robert Warren "Bo" Williams of Shreveport; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Burnett has been recognized by his peers for his objective political commentary with receipt of numerous awards that include selection by the Louisiana Press Association on three separate occasions as Best Column for Continuing Coverage of Governmental Issues in The Forum; and

WHEREAS, for his service on Capitol Hill, Mr. Burnett was named to Personalities of the South by the American Biographical Institute and Who's Who in American Politics; and

WHEREAS, in 2017, Lou Gehrig Burnett was honored by his alma mater with induction into the Manship School of Mass Communication Hall of Fame at Louisiana State University; and

WHEREAS, Lou Gehrig Burnett experienced tremendous success throughout his career; he frequently spoke about local topics at civic functions; and he was instrumental in the founding of the Media Lunch Bunch, a gathering of journalists who meet to discuss news topics of interest and these luncheons are often attended by community officials, candidates, and dignitaries; and

WHEREAS, during his lifetime, Lou Gehrig Burnett witnessed the evolution in the delivery of news and political commentary and its migration from newspaper print to digital

media, and he witnessed the expansion of readership far beyond the hometown newspaper to the global internet; and

WHEREAS, Lou Gehrig Burnett shall be missed by his brothers, Huey, Glenn, and Donald Burnett, extended family, many friends, and his readership.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express sincere and heartfelt condolences on the passing of Lou Gehrig Burnett, a rare breed of journalist, political writer, and publisher.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Burnett Family.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES