

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 116

BY SENATOR JOHN SMITH

A RESOLUTION

To commend Phyllis Perron on her retirement after more than thirty-five-year career as an effective and well-respected lobbyist at the Louisiana State Capitol.

WHEREAS, Phyllis Perron grew up on a farm in a small rural community in Evangeline Parish, outside of Ville Platte, Louisiana, the parish seat; and

WHEREAS, on the farm, her family grew cotton, rice, sweet potatoes, and soybeans; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Perron grew up competing in 4-H competitions and attending Sacred Heart High School, a kindergarten through twelfth grade school, and she graduated in a class of thirty-two students; and

WHEREAS, Evangeline Parish in south central Louisiana, is an area noted for its production of political and governmental office holders and its politically active citizenry; and

WHEREAS, considering this atmosphere, it was not surprising that Phyllis Perron grew up with a healthy interest in both Evangeline Parish and statewide politics or that her graduation class produced three state legislators, two current sitting judges, and two others who were elected to serve on school boards; and

WHEREAS, politics was always both a topic of discussion and an activity in Evangeline Parish and many fish fries for the assessor, clerk of court, sheriff, and other local politicians were held at Ms. Perron's daddy's camp; and

WHEREAS, Phyllis Perron's mother clerked at the polls on election days and Phyllis Perron's uncle was a state legislator; and

WHEREAS, Phyllis Perron admits that the political atmosphere of Evangeline Parish

was an influence on her growing up, once reflecting that, "I came from an area that was very political ... we were just politically active"; and

WHEREAS, after high school, Ms. Perron did travel to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, but it was to attend Louisiana State University and the School of Home Economics, where she studied fashion and interior design; and

WHEREAS, it was her college major, rather than the political influences she grew up around, that determined Phyllis Perron's first job, which was as a home service representative for Central Louisiana Electric Company (CLECO) and Dixie Electric Membership Company (DEMCO), where she was working with home builders and local chambers of commerce, teaching in high school home economics classes and Girl Scout troops, and chaperoning beauty queens; and

WHEREAS, eventually Phyllis Perron's upbringing amid political activism led her to accept the position as executive director of the Louisiana Egg Commission, which led to an appointment to the newly formed governor's office of consumer protection; and

WHEREAS, in her position in the governor's office, Phyllis Perron learned invaluable lessons about the legislative process and the rulemaking process; and

WHEREAS, in 1977, the Louisiana Association of Life Underwriters was in search of an executive director who could lobby on behalf of the association's three thousand members, and Phyllis Perron was selected and her lobbying career had begun; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Perron became interested in representing more than just one entity, thus, in 1984, she formed Phyllis Perron and Associates, which over the course of more than thirty-five years has become a major political and governmental relations and association management firm; and

WHEREAS, the firm lobbies legislators, performs regulatory duties on behalf of clients, primarily in the insurance industry, and provides management services to professional organizations, such as the Louisiana Pharmacists Association; and

WHEREAS, Phyllis Perron sees as one of her proudest moments, as an active participant in the legislative process, her work to establish the Louisiana Life and Health Insurance Guaranty Association in 1991, which serves as a safety net for policyholders of an insurer that becomes insolvent; and

WHEREAS, over her long career of legislative involvement, Ms. Perron has seen great improvements, including the new ethics laws that regulate the conduct of legislators, in large part, in relation to their conduct with lobbyists, making for more transparency for the public and the technology that has allowed citizens to follow government activities, including events at the legislature; and

WHEREAS, Phyllis Perron has observed two changes that she considers to be negative with regard to the legislative process; first, term limits, saying, "We've lost a lot of knowledge and I don't think its been beneficial" and, second, experiencing "the growing divide in Louisiana politics ... seeing partisanship come about that I never expected"; and

WHEREAS, a commitment to the political process and an inclination to assist in that process to the betterment of the lives of the people of Louisiana have been hallmarks of Phyllis Perron's tenure at the capitol and she has her reputation, her accomplishments, and the building of an effective business to speak to the success of her worthwhile endeavors.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend Phyllis Perron on her retirement after a more than thirty-five-year career as an effective and well-respected lobbyist at the Louisiana State Capitol.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Phyllis Perron.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE