

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 129

BY SENATOR KOSTELKA

A RESOLUTION

To express the sincere condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the death of Professor Emeritus Robert C. Snyder Sr. educator, civic leader, and public servant.

WHEREAS, it is with great sadness that the Legislature of Louisiana has learned of the passing of Professor Emeritus Robert C. Snyder Sr. age ninety-two, on Wednesday, June 8, 2011, just nine weeks after the death of his beloved wife of sixty-five years, Virginia Webb Snyder; and

WHEREAS, Robert Snyder was born in Niota, Tennessee, on April 30, 1919, the youngest of six children; and

WHEREAS, he attended Tennessee Wesleyan College in Athens, Tennessee; studied at Florence State now the University of Northern Alabama, Western Kentucky, and Tulane; attended graduate school at Vanderbilt; and, with his family, spent summers at the University of Mississippi and the University of Alabama; and

WHEREAS, although teaching was his passion, "Bob" Snyder was involved in civic and state affairs for many years; and

WHEREAS, in the 1950s, 60s, and 70s, he was a prolific lecturer on cultural, civic, and educational affairs throughout the state, was chosen as a member of the Executive Council on the Louisiana Commission for the Humanities, served as a national editorial critic for many specialized publications, and fielded questions on a weekly radio broadcast in Shreveport; and

WHEREAS, in 1962, Mr. Snyder worked to establish the Lincoln Parish Library, serving as President of the Board from its inception to recent years; in 1966, Governor McKeithen appointed him to the State Library Board of Commissioners; and he was reappointed as President of the State Library Board, was awarded the coveted Modisette Award by the Louisiana Library Association, and served as a national officer in the American Library Association; and

WHEREAS, in 1971, he was appointed by Governor Treen to serve on the Louisiana State Ethics Commission and served as Chairman and was a board member for twenty-six years; and

WHEREAS, Bob Snyder was proud to have been employed during war time as an "engineer" by the Atomic Energy Commission to work on the Top Secret Manhattan Project at Oak Ridge, Tennessee during the development of the Atomic bomb; and

WHEREAS, above all, Professor Snyder enjoyed a remarkable forty-two year career at Louisiana Tech University during which time, he was head of the Department of English and Foreign Language and later the Department of English; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Snyder was also an avid sports fan, as both he and his wife attended Tech football and basketball games and other events regularly, and he served on the Tech Athletic Council from the late 1950's through the 1980's; and

WHEREAS, he loved the classroom where he instructed, encouraged, counseled, consoled, challenged, and inspired students and, to his last days, could recall the countless Tech students he taught by name; and

WHEREAS, Professor Snyder, in a speech many years ago, first espoused his philosophy of life as follows:

"I am so very weary of hearing that the world is going to be blown up—that youth is not to be trusted—that there is no chance for greatness today—that most of the frontiers have been conquered," he said. "Let me say to you that all of these suggestions are untrue and will not come to pass, for we are actually just in the infancy of civilization, and you are living in a glorious age and day. Man is just beginning to crawl, so to speak."

"Troubles and problems will give you strength," he said. "Your only resolve should be to maintain fidelity to just principle, to what is right, to what is noble, to what ought to be."; and

WHEREAS, at his retirement in 1989, he was honored to be conferred the rare Professor Emeritus title, became Louisiana Tech's first Distinguished Professor, and former students, Charles and Sam Wyly established the Robert C. Snyder Chair English Endowment; and

WHEREAS, he was selected by the Louisiana Tech Alumni Association for the school's Arliss Scroggin's Award for Distinguished Service to the university well after retirement in 2005; and

WHEREAS, he was preceded in death by his parents, Sophia Elizabeth Brock and Robert Harrison Snyder; step-mother, Alpha Simpson Snyder; his beloved wife, Virginia

Webb Snyder; sisters, Elizabeth Snyder Harrington, Ava Snyder Glendenning; Mary Frances Snyder Smith; brothers, Samuel Snyder, Gilbert Snyder; and half sisters, Mary Jane Snyder Sewell and Sue Snyder Long; and

WHEREAS, Robert Snyder is survived by his three devoted children, seven grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren: Rebecca Snyder Howard and husband Dr. Rennie Howard; Stephana Snyder Dean and husband Albert " Bud"; Dr. Robert C. Snyder, Jr. and wife Gayle Langley Snyder and daughter Molly Snyder; grandchildren, Tad Howard and wife Susan and son Grady; Scottie Howard Brown and husband David Brown; Virginia "Ginny" Dean Nolen and husband Drew and children Melanie and Mary Elizabeth Nolen; Robbie Dean; Dr. Steven Snyder and wife Janet and children Will and Evelyn; Dr. Hunter Snyder and wife Jennifer and daughter Jillian; two beloved half-brothers, William Snyder and Joe Snyder and their families; and many cherished nieces and nephews; and

WHEREAS, he was as beloved as he was at times difficult; his brilliancy had no match; his white long sleeve starched shirts and seer sucker suits...his knowing laugh, his acerbic wit and charm, and his engaging manner of telling stories combined with his refinement will be forever missed; and

WHEREAS, he was a caring and devoted husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, brother, uncle, and friend and his memory will live forever in the minds and hearts of those who knew and loved him.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby recognize and acknowledge the many contributions of Professor Robert C. Snyder to the United States of America, Louisiana, and Louisiana Tech University, but primarily his lasting impact upon his students, and does hereby express sincere condolences to the family of Professor Robert C. Snyder upon the occasion of his death.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Rebecca Snyder Howard, Stephana Snyder Dean, and Dr. Robert C. Snyder, Jr.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE