

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 94

BY SENATORS CHAISSON, ADLEY, ALARIO, AMEDEE, APPEL, BROOME, CHABERT, CHEEK, CLAITOR, CROWE, DONAHUE, DORSEY, ERDEY, GAUTREAUX, GUILLORY, HEITMEIER, JACKSON, KOSTELKA, LAFLEUR, LONG, MARIONNEAUX, MARTINY, MICHOT, MILLS, MORRELL, MORRISH, MOUNT, MURRAY, NEVERS, PERRY, PETERSON, QUINN, RISER, SHAW, SMITH, THOMPSON, WALSWORTH AND WILLARD-LEWIS

A RESOLUTION

To honor and commend the Dean of the Louisiana Senate, the Honorable William Joseph "Joe" McPherson Jr. for his dedicated service and outstanding contributions to the state, Senate District No. 29, and the parish of Rapides, during twenty-four years of dedicated service in the Louisiana Senate, and to express enduring gratitude for his efforts in making Louisiana a better place for the citizens of this state.

WHEREAS, William Joseph "Joe" McPherson Jr. is a lifelong resident of Rapides Parish and a proud graduate of Pineville High School and Northwestern State University; and

WHEREAS, early in his life, the law was of great interest to Joe and he pursued this interest by attending law school at Louisiana State University until he realized that he already knew the law better than the law knew itself; and

WHEREAS, he proudly served his country and was honorably discharged from the United States Army Reserves; and

WHEREAS, Senator McPherson is a successful businessman and nursing home owner; an entrepreneur whose business interests have included an automobile dealership, real estate, farming, and tug boat operation, to name a few; and

WHEREAS, his personal pursuits over the years have included setting records as a power boat racer and excelling in bull riding, where he no doubt developed his approach to life and politics; and

WHEREAS, in 1983, Joe McPherson determined to give back to his community, ran

for election to the Louisiana Senate from District 29 and was successful in that effort; and

WHEREAS, recognizing Senator McPherson's dedication and efforts on their behalf, the citizens of District 29 again elected him to the Senate in 1987 and 1991, and again in 1999, 2003, and 2007, giving him the distinction of being the longest serving Louisiana State Senator and, although he may characterize it differently, the distinction of serving under five different governors; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure in the Louisiana Senate, Joe McPherson has served on the following standing committees: Finance; Labor and Industrial Relations; Agriculture, Aquaculture, and Rural Development; Local and Municipal Affairs; Natural Resources; Transportation, Highways and Public Works; Health and Welfare; and Judiciary C; and

WHEREAS, he has served as chairman of the Senate Health and Welfare Committee, the Senate Natural Resources Committee, the Senate Labor and Industrial Relations Committee, and the Senate Transportation, Highways and Public Works Committee, and has also served as vice chairman of the Senate Finance Committee; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of State Senate District 29 and the citizens of this entire state have benefitted in countless ways from Senator McPherson's public service as he has authored legislation, most notably, to reform the way health care is provided in this state, to create the Alexandria Port Authority, to create the England Economic Development District, to designate Louisiana State University at Alexandria as a four-year degree-granting institution, and to advance railroad safety issues; and

WHEREAS, Senator McPherson has been recognized as an outstanding proponent of the individual, particularly the Second Amendment civil right of law-abiding American citizens to keep and bear arms and the constitutional right of a person to protect his home against expropriation for commercial purposes; and

WHEREAS, through his years as a public servant, Senator McPherson has worked tirelessly for the citizens of this state and has been foremost a champion of the people and the area of Central Louisiana and Rapides Parish in particular; and

WHEREAS, Senator McPherson maneuvers through the legislative process with the precision and skill of a master politician, and his talent and ability has garnered him a legendary reputation as a skilled debater and formidable adversary, armed with a lightning-

quick wit and a mastery of the one-liner, leading one of his colleagues to describe a floor debate with Senator McPherson as "forty miles of bad road"; and

WHEREAS, many have, over the years, foolishly believed they have won an argument with Senator McPherson, only to realize when confronted with that impish grin and a twinkle in the eye, that a different result awaits and they soon are faced with the reality of being led, almost willingly, down the path to legislative purgatory; and

WHEREAS, with the deepest reverence for the legislative process and an unmatched understanding of the rules of the Senate, Senator McPherson is always quick to point out any lapse of legislative protocol, such as the fine line between personal privilege and what he affectionately refers to as "Howdy Doody" time; and

WHEREAS, while some of his colleagues have, at times, mispronounced his last name with an "EAR" sound and not an "ER" sound, Senator McPherson has gently reminded them, "There's no fear in McPherson"; and

WHEREAS, the senator has acknowledged that while he has passed numerous pieces of legislation of great importance to Central Louisiana and the entire state, he is proudest of the many bad bills he has lovingly killed; and

WHEREAS, all of Senator McPherson's fellow senators will agree that Joe McPherson is the embodiment of the word "colleague"; his word is his bond and, most importantly, if he has your back you never need to look over your shoulder; and

WHEREAS, Senator McPherson is the loving husband to the former Karen Saucier and the proud father of William Joseph McPherson III; and

WHEREAS, when not spending time with his family, one can surely find Senator McPherson riding his tractor or at his camp enjoying the outdoors and nature; and

WHEREAS, as the founder and leader of the Louisiana Sportsmen's Caucus, Senator McPherson has consistently displayed a passion for the outdoors, working tirelessly to protect the natural resources of the state, creating three new state wildlife management areas and, most importantly, preserving public control of White Lake; and has been recognized for his efforts by being named 2008 State Legislator of the Year by the Safari Club International; by being awarded the 2005 Governor's Award for Conservation; and by being named Legislative Conservationist of the Year on several occasions; and

WHEREAS, Senator McPherson has fought to preserve the right to hunt, fish and trap, as embedded in his personal motto – "If you love something, set it free. If it doesn't come back, hunt it down and shoot it."; and

WHEREAS, his career in public life has been underscored by his uncompromising efforts to make this a better state by improving the welfare of its people and has tirelessly dedicated his many talents, his intelligence, his compassion and energy to the service of his family, his many friends, his community and his state.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend and congratulate the "Dean of the Louisiana Senate", the Honorable William Joseph "Joe" McPherson Jr. for his outstanding and lasting accomplishments as a member of the Louisiana Senate and the uncompromising endeavors undertaken by him on behalf of his constituents and the citizens of this state.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that enduring gratitude is hereby expressed for his service to the state, Senate District 29, and the Parish of Rapides.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that tribute is hereby paid for the steadfast and effective way in which Senator Joe McPherson has made a difference, his exemplary achievements, and for unforgettable moments as a member of this distinguished body.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that best wishes are hereby extended to Joe McPherson for continued prosperity and success in his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Honorable William Joseph "Joe" McPherson Jr.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE