

2023 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 152

BY SENATOR CORTEZ

COMMENDATIONS. Commends Senator Gregory Tarver for his years of distinguished public service.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To commend the Honorable Gregory W. Tarver Sr. for his forty-nine years of exemplary
3 public service and to express enduring gratitude for his outstanding contributions
4 made on behalf of his constituents and the state of Louisiana, particularly his tenure
5 as a distinguished member of the Louisiana Senate representing District 39.

6 WHEREAS, Gregory W. Tarver Sr. was born at the end of WWII in Shreveport,
7 Louisiana, one of seven children; and

8 WHEREAS, at an early age, Greg learned from his mother Balistine the importance
9 of service, hard work, and treating people with dignity and respect; and

10 WHEREAS, Greg also learned the importance of saving money and being financially
11 responsible from his Nanny, Aunt Pearlie; knowledge that has served him well throughout
12 his life; and

13 WHEREAS, Greg entered Grambling State University but his studies were
14 interrupted in 1967 when he was drafted into the Vietnam War; and

15 WHEREAS, his experience serving in the military proved to be a defining time in
16 his life; risking his life fighting overseas for a country that did not treat him equally inspired
17 him to join the fight for social change that would chart a course for the remainder of his life;
18 and

1 WHEREAS, upon returning from Vietnam, Tarver took over as CEO of his family's
2 now one hundred twelve year old funeral home business and joined the Shreveport Chapter
3 of the NAACP; and

4 WHEREAS, Tarver actively participated in boycotts and marches in the Shreveport
5 area and quickly became a civil rights leader in Shreveport as he protested discriminatory
6 hiring practices at local businesses, segregation at lunch counters, and police brutality; and

7 WHEREAS, Tarver also joined other local civil rights leaders in the fight for better
8 job opportunities and equal funding for African-American educational institutions; and

9 WHEREAS, in 1972, as a member of the Board of Directors of Confederate
10 Memorial Medical Center, now LSU Health Sciences Center - Shreveport, Tarver
11 experienced one of his proudest moments which included working with other community
12 leaders in the effort that ultimately led to changing the name of Confederate Memorial
13 Medical Center to LSU Medical Center; and

14 WHEREAS, Tarver continued his fight for justice and equality when he was elected
15 to serve as a Caddo Parish Police Juror in 1974 and then as a Shreveport City Councilman
16 from 1978 to 1984; as one of only three black members, Tarver worked hard to ensure that
17 Shreveport's city government served all of its citizens, including providing funding for
18 infrastructure in neglected African-American neighborhoods and equitable hiring practices
19 at both the Shreveport police and fire departments; and

20 WHEREAS, Tarver knew the importance of affordable housing for low and moderate
21 income families and was instrumental in establishing the Shreveport Home Mortgage
22 Authority which assisted families in building and financing their homes; and

23 WHEREAS, in 1984, Tarver became the first African American elected to the
24 Louisiana State Senate from North Louisiana since Reconstruction; and

25 WHEREAS, during his years in the Senate, Tarver secured millions of dollars for a
26 Lakeside-Allendale-based community program called the Association for Community
27 Training which included an after-school studies program, homemakers' program for the
28 elderly, childcare food program, teenage girls and boys outreach, drug education and
29 prevention program; and

30 WHEREAS, realizing that Shreveport had no museums of different cultures, in 1999,

1 Tarver also spearheaded the establishment of the Multi-Cultural Center of the South; and

2 WHEREAS, Tarver helped secure millions of dollars for the LSU Health Science
3 Center in Shreveport, which helped to fund construction and renovations of the Cancer
4 Center, Ambulatory Care Building, Women's and Children's Clinic, a Pediatric ICU, the
5 Alphonse Jackson Classroom Building, the Allied Health Facility, a Gene Therapy
6 Consortium, a Sickle Cell Clinic, an Emergency Care Center Expansion, the Center of
7 Excellence for Clinical Forensic Toxicology, and the Arthritis Center; and

8 WHEREAS, Senator Tarver fought to grow and expand Southern University
9 Shreveport by working to secure millions of dollars for the expansion and renovations of
10 programs and buildings that included the Administration Building, the Johnny Vance
11 Activity Center, the Nursing Program, the Dental Hygiene Program, and the Aerospace
12 Technology Center; and

13 WHEREAS, Tarver fought to secure millions of dollars for local jobs, businesses,
14 and infrastructure for the Shreveport community; and

15 WHEREAS, Tarver also worked to secure millions of dollars for projects to benefit
16 the rural areas in his district which included the cities, towns, and villages of: Belcher,
17 Blanchard, Gilliam, Hosston, Ida, Mooringsport, Oil City, Rodessa, Vivian, and Mira; and

18 WHEREAS, after twenty years in the Senate and serving as Chairman of the Senate
19 Insurance Committee and as a member of the Finance Committee, Environmental Quality
20 Committee and Judiciary B Committee, Senator Tarver decided not to seek reelection in
21 2004 so he could spend more time with his growing family and focus on expanding a
22 company he established for his family, Quality Office Supply; and

23 WHEREAS, following his decision not to seek reelection, Senator Tarver and his
24 wife Velma cofounded the VRC Educational and Scholarship Program which was started
25 with personal monies and sustained by personal donations made monthly by the senator and
26 his wife; and

27 WHEREAS, since its inception, VRC Educational and Scholarship Program has
28 awarded over \$75,000 in scholarships to students in Northern Caddo Parish; and

29 WHEREAS, after an eight-year hiatus from politics, Tarver decided it was time for
30 him to run to represent North Shreveport and the surrounding areas in Baton Rouge again;

1 and

2 WHEREAS, in 2011 Senator Tarver was elected to serve the people of Senate
3 District 39 to work hard for North Louisiana and live up to his slogan, "He Gets the Job
4 Done"; and

5 WHEREAS, over the past twelve years, Senator Tarver has primarily focused on
6 securing proper state funding for LSU Health Sciences Center in Shreveport to ensure it
7 remains a viable, robust research center; equitable funding for Louisiana's public historically
8 black universities and ensuring that the necessary funding is allocated for the cities, towns,
9 and villages in his district; and

10 WHEREAS, Senator Tarver's passion for LSU Health Sciences Center in Shreveport
11 is irrefutable and has allowed the organization to deliver exemplary medical education and
12 lifesaving healthcare services for all citizens in North Louisiana; and

13 WHEREAS, Senator Tarver has guided millions of dollars toward needed resources
14 for new equipment for surgical and clinical skills labs, a mobile cancer screening van for
15 rural communities providing patients from all socioeconomic levels cutting-edge treatment;
16 and

17 WHEREAS, Senator Tarver directed dedicated state funding for LSU Health
18 Sciences Center in Shreveport's state-of-the-art, 155,000-square-foot Center for Medical
19 Education and Emerging Viral Threats; and

20 WHEREAS, during the 2021 arctic outbreak in which Shreveport experienced
21 treacherous conditions that negatively impacted infrastructure, Senator Tarver quickly
22 recognized the need for LSU Health Sciences Center to have a separate water source to
23 ensure needed healthcare services would always be available even during inclement weather
24 events and steered funds to create the comprehensive emergency water supply
25 improvements; and

26 WHEREAS, Senator Tarver has also been an ardent and steadfast supporter of
27 Southern University and Grambling State University; and

28 WHEREAS, throughout Senator Tarver's long public service career, he has been the
29 catalyst for securing much-needed funding, ensuring equity in the allocation of resources,
30 and a constant promoter of historically black colleges and universities in Louisiana; and

1 WHEREAS, through Senator Tarver's efforts, students have been able to pursue their
2 degrees in newly built or updated classrooms, have access to modern state-of-the-art
3 technology, and are taught by world-renowned educators; and

4 WHEREAS, Senator Tarver has forged a political career that has endured for almost
5 half a century which includes serving in the Senate under five governors and participating
6 in seventy-six regular, extraordinary, and organizational sessions; and

7 WHEREAS, devoted husband, father, and businessman, Senator Gregory Tarver
8 helped shape Louisiana's social, political, and economic landscape for the betterment of all
9 people; and

10 WHEREAS, Senator Tarver's legacy will live on in future generations who will have
11 a better life and more opportunities because of his dedicated service; and

12 WHEREAS, as he prepares for the next chapter of life, Senator Gregory Tarver
13 merits a special tribute for his years of faithful public service, for his contributions to the
14 betterment of the state of Louisiana, and for his exemplary accomplishments as a faithful
15 public servant.

16 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana
17 does hereby commend and congratulate Gregory W. Tarver Sr. for his forty-nine years of
18 public service.

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
20 Honorable Gregory W. Tarver, the distinguished legislator representing Louisiana Senatorial
21 District 39.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Cathy R. Wells.

SR 152 Original

DIGEST
2023 Regular Session

Cortez

Commends and congratulates Gregory W. Tarver Sr. for his 49 years of public service.