

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 8

BY SENATORS JOHNS, MORRISH AND JOHN SMITH

A RESOLUTION

To commend and congratulate Dr. Philip C. Williams, president of McNeese State University, on the occasion of his retirement.

WHEREAS, Dr. Philip C. Williams, who took office as president of McNeese State University on July 1, 2010, as the sixth president in the university's seventy-eight year history, will retire on June 30, 2017; and

WHEREAS, prior to his appointment at McNeese, the North Carolina native served as president of the University of Montevallo in Montevallo, Alabama; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Williams earned his B.A., M.P.H., and PhD from the University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill and JD from Columbia University; and

WHEREAS, he has served in leadership positions across the community, including the board of directors of the Council for a Better Louisiana (CABL), the Iberia Bank Community Advisory Board, the Southwest Louisiana Alliance Foundation (regional Chamber of Commerce) Board of Directors, and chair of the Southland Conference (NCAA Division 1) Board of Directors, and as a member of the finance committee of the Church of the Good Shepherd, and the CABL Leadership Louisiana Class of 2011; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Williams received both the 2017 Chairman's Cup Award for McNeese's contributions to the Southwest Louisiana tourism industry and the 2013 Community Service Award from the Lake Charles/Southwest Louisiana Convention & Visitors Bureau; and

WHEREAS, McNeese was recognized as the 2014 Louisiana Outstanding Arts Organization by Lt. Gov. Jay Dardenne and the Louisiana Office of Cultural Development for providing the Southwest Louisiana community with easy access to exceptional arts and humanities events that are unique to this area; and

WHEREAS, over \$124 million was invested in campus facilities through state capital outlay funds, local and federal grants, FEMA and insurance settlements, students' self-generated assessments, and private donors that were either started or completed under Dr. Williams' tenure; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Williams presided over the development of a new strategic plan, which featured the promotion of innovative teaching and learning, regional partnerships, service-learning opportunities, applied research, cultural engagement, athletic excellence, and led the celebration of McNeese's 75th anniversary in 2014; and

WHEREAS, under Dr. Williams' leadership, McNeese continues to play a pivotal role in providing well-prepared, innovative leaders by offering outstanding academic programs and focusing on student success and affordability as *U.S. News & World Report* named McNeese one of the best regional universities in the South for the sixth consecutive year; and

WHEREAS, McNeese has been selected as a "Top School" in the *2017 Military Advanced Education and Transition Guide to Colleges and Universities*, and in 2016, McNeese was also designated as a Military Friendly School by Victory Media and named a "Governor's Military and Veteran Friendly Campus"; and

WHEREAS, McNeese signed a formal agreement with the U.S. Army to offer classes and academic support services to soldiers, new and previously enrolled military students, family members, and civilians at Fort Polk; and

WHEREAS, McNeese and Sowela Technical Community College have signed agreements for shared services and residential housing between the two institutions; and

WHEREAS, McNeese hosted the first academic summit sponsored by the University of Louisiana System that focused on service-learning, the arts, and undergraduate research; and

WHEREAS, McNeese's commercial free radio station, KBYS 88.3 FM, opened and is Louisiana's first university-community radio station; and

WHEREAS, McNeese opened the Center for Advancement of Meat Production and Processing (CAMPP), in Lacassine, as a satellite campus under the administration of the Harold and Pearl Dripps Agricultural Sciences Department to conduct applied research related to agricultural sciences and to support workforce development in the area; and

WHEREAS, with the opening of the Student Innovation Center in the SEED Center, McNeese has positioned itself to be a university of innovation - one where new ideas and emerging technologies are embraced to cultivate business creativity, innovation, and

invention for the future as McNeese was the second university in the country to offer a unique innovation curriculum, which is open to all students; and

WHEREAS, McNeese's College of Engineering and Computer ranks third nationally among all public and private engineering schools in terms of career return on investment for its engineering majors by the 2017 College ROI Report by PayScale Inc., which tops all engineering programs in the state of Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, McNeese won the 2015-2016 Southland Strong Community Service Award that is presented to the SLC school whose student-athletes completed the most service hours during the academic year; and

WHEREAS, McNeese won the 2014-2015 Southland Conference Academic Performance Award for posting the best results among all schools on the NCAA Academic Progress Rate covering all sports over a four-year period; and

WHEREAS, McNeese athletic teams won 11 regular Southland Conference season championships and four Southland Conference tournament championships and McNeese rodeo team members won three national individual rodeo championships; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Williams merits highest commendation for the indelible mark he has left on McNeese State University and its students, faculty, and staff as a truly exemplary educator and public servant.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate does hereby commend Dr. Philip C. Williams upon his retirement as president of McNeese State University and recognize and record his notable achievements and manifold contributions to the education community, his students, the citizens of Lake Charles, and the state of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate does hereby wish Dr. Williams, his wife, Sandra, and son, Grant, who has received both his bachelor's and master's from McNeese, well on this next chapter of their lives.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Dr. Philip C. Williams.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE