

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 9

BY SENATOR RISER

A RESOLUTION

To commend C.S. "Cheeze" Hamilton on his fifty-seven year career as a West Feliciana Parish school bus driver.

WHEREAS, for over fifty years, Cheeze Hamilton took his responsibility of getting young children to school and safely home at the end of the day very seriously while also bringing these students into his heart; and

WHEREAS, in 1960 the West Feliciana Parish school board made an exception to its employment policy and hired nineteen year old Cheeze Hamilton as a school bus driver, just before his high school graduation, because he, his mother, and his sisters were struggling to keep their farm and provide for the family in the wake of the unexpected death of his father; and

WHEREAS, knowing that driving a school bus would require discipline, care, intelligence, attention to detail, and unfailing reliability, the school board and all who knew Cheeze, understood that even at such a tender age he possessed all those qualities and would serve the children well; and

WHEREAS, Wednesday, May 17, 2017, was the last day of the school year, which, on Mr. Hamilton's bus, meant that the students would receive a popsicle as they got off the bus at their homes, their treat to mark the end of another school year and celebrate the beginning of summer vacation; and

WHEREAS, the annual bus driver's dinner was scheduled for the evening of May 17th and, although Cheeze Hamilton kept the announcement of his retirement quiet, word got out and the event became a celebration of Mr. Hamilton's career, where his friends, family, and many fans gathered to shake his hand and celebrate his passion for his career,

the care he took with all the children who rode his bus, and the love that he shared with three generations of riders; and

WHEREAS, Cheeze Hamilton is known for his big heart, his big hat, and his big smile with which he greeted every day's precious cargo of children whose parents gratefully entrusted to him; and

WHEREAS, to the delight of his student riders, Cheeze Hamilton had a penchant for keeping animals on his bus, including a favorite goat who was tied up next to his seat so that each child could give the goat a good head-scratch while getting on and off the bus and various injured birds, turtles, puppies, kittens, and squirrels were rescued by Cheeze and placed in a shoe box, which would be entrusted to whichever child was sitting in the front seat; and

WHEREAS, while somehow keeping mostly to his schedule, Mr. Hamilton was never hesitant to deviate from that schedule in order to do something kind or worthwhile, modeling for the children the important life skills of kindness, charity, and love; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Hamilton once heard the children teasing a boy for eating raw corn as a snack and he came to the child's defense, saying that raw corn was a healthy and delicious snack and promptly pulled the bus over near a cornfield and had the children hop off and grab an ear of corn, whereupon it was decided that the raw corn was indeed a delicious treat; and

WHEREAS, Cheeze Hamilton was known to have stopped to help stranded motorists and to take a child to his own home halfway through his route to have his wife tend to a nosebleed or a scraped knee, before continuing along his way; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Hamilton drove more gravel roads than paved, especially in the early years when his route took him along the Mississippi border, and he acquired the skill necessary to wrangle a twenty-five hundred pound bus out of the mud; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Cheeze Hamilton brought caring, joy, empathy, and an understanding of the positive impact he could have on the children who rode on his bus to a job that became his life's work, his passion, and his unselfish gift to the children lucky enough to have ridden on his bus during his fifty-seven years as a school bus driver in West Feliciana Parish.

SR NO. 9

ENROLLED

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend C.S."Cheeze" Hamilton on his fifty-seven year career as a West Feliciana Parish school bus driver.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Mr. C.S. "Cheeze" Hamilton.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE