

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 152

BY SENATORS CORTEZ, ABRAHAM, ALLAIN, BARROW, BERNARD, BOUDREAUX, BOUIE, CARTER, CATHEY, CLOUD, CONNICK, DUPLESSIS, FESI, FIELDS, FOIL, HARRIS, HENRY, HENSGENS, HEWITT, JACKSON, KLEINPETER, LAMBERT, LUNEAU, MCMATH, MILLIGAN, FRED MILLS, ROBERT MILLS, MIZELL, MORRIS, PEACOCK, POPE, PRICE, REESE, SMITH, STINE, TALBOT, WHITE AND WOMACK

A RESOLUTION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, realizing that Shreveport had no museums of different cultures, in 1999, Tarver also spearheaded the establishment of the Multi-Cultural Center of the South; and

WHEREAS, Tarver helped secure millions of dollars for the LSU Health Science Center in Shreveport, which helped to fund construction and renovations of the Cancer Center, Ambulatory Care Building, Women's and Children's Clinic, a Pediatric ICU, the Alphonse Jackson Classroom Building, the Allied Health Facility, a Gene Therapy Consortium, a Sickle Cell Clinic, an Emergency Care Center Expansion, the Center of

Excellence for Clinical Forensic Toxicology, and the Arthritis Center; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, over the past twelve years, Senator Tarver has primarily focused on securing proper state funding for LSU Health Sciences Center in Shreveport to ensure it

remains a viable, robust research center; equitable funding for Louisiana's public historically black universities and ensuring that the necessary funding is allocated for the cities, towns, and villages in his district; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE