SLS 18RS-2121 **ORIGINAL**

2018 Regular Session

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 121

BY SENATOR CLAITOR

CONDOLENCES. Expresses sincere condolences upon the passing of Dr. Paul Whitfield Murrill, former chancellor of LSU.

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To express the sincere condolences of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the passing of Paul Whitfield Murrill, PhD, the second chancellor of Louisiana State University at Baton Rouge, and to recognize his lifetime of achievement.

WHEREAS, it is with deep regret that the Legislature of Louisiana has learned of the passing of Dr. Paul Murrill, a superb academic and exceptional leader of the state's flagship university, LSU; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Murrill was a gentleman renowned for his vision, calm demeanor, thoughtful perspective, and outstanding leadership capabilities who had dedicated two decades to LSU as a student, instructor, professor, and chancellor; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Murrill had a commanding presence, that rare quality attributed to leaders whose charisma creates enthusiasm and motivation in others; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Murrill envisioned a lofty destiny for LSU and witnessed many advancements during his seven-year tenure as chancellor, from his appointment in 1974 until his retirement in 1981, and the continued improvement of LSU standards was his goal; and

WHEREAS, his personal quest for scholarship began in a one-room schoolhouse in Hinds County, Mississippi; he was awarded a United States Navy ROTC scholarship to attend the University of Mississippi (Ole Miss) where he graduated magna cum laude with

a bachelor of science degree in chemical engineering; and

WHEREAS, to fulfill his military service obligation, he received a commission as a U.S. Navy Ensign, he was placed on active duty aboard the USS Valley Forge, and he attained the rank of Lieutenant Junior Grade before being honorably discharged; and

WHEREAS, after a brief career as a chemical engineer, he pursued advanced degrees in chemical engineering at LSU with completion of his doctorate program in 1963; and

WHEREAS, his teaching career began as a part-time instructor while still in graduate school and he then attained the position of assistant professor of chemical and mechanical engineering; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Murrill possessed a keen intellect with an unusual proficiency for chemistry and mechanical structure; he was awarded the rank of full professor and was selected as head of the Chemical Engineering Department in 1968; and

WHEREAS, his intellectual prowess and leadership expertise afforded Dr. Murrill the opportunity to shift from academics to administration in the LSU system hierarchy and to accept appointments as provost, vice chancellor, and dean of academic affairs in rather quick succession; and

WHEREAS, providing stellar performances in each of these roles, Dr. Murrill was selected as the second chancellor of the LSU main campus at a youthful thirty-nine years of age; and

WHEREAS, in the 1970s, state higher education institutions were awash with available funding for new construction and for extraordinary research opportunities in the fields of medicine, engineering, nuclear science, computer science, fisheries, and agriculture; and

WHEREAS, a philanthropic donation of $125 million secured the construction of Pennington Biomedical Research Center; today, its biomedical research findings in nutritional studies are heralded among the international scientific community; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Murrill was at the epicenter of an era of exponential expansion of the scope of LSU as an educational powerhouse and economic engine; and

WHEREAS, under his tutelage, LSU was granted a chapter of Phi Beta Kappa and had established the Louisiana Sea Grant in partnership with the National Oceanic and

Atmospheric Administration; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure, university life was affected by the socioeconomic and political changes that impacted the nation; it was a time of mercurial social and ethnic revolution and demands for equality challenged the rigid conventions of the past; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Murrill attended to every challenge with thoughtful deliberation and came away with some satisfactory degree of compromise on the issues at hand; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Murrill oversaw the execution of Title IX federal mandates for equitable athletic funding regardless of gender which gave rise to women's intercollegiate sports and the availability of scholarships for female athletes; his approach, the "21 Plan", called for ten men's sports, ten women's sports, and the (one) football program to provide funding for all the athletic programs; and

WHEREAS, after his retirement from LSU, Dr. Murrill had an accomplished career as an advisor and executive board member for twenty-seven corporations; and

WHEREAS, with a superior background in academia and business along with his expertise in various engineering disciplines, Dr. Murrill was sought out as a consultant for commercial, industrial, governmental, and academic organizations; and

WHEREAS, he wrote and edited technical manuals, including seminal texts on process theory which are still in use today; praised for its clear presentation of the basic principles of process automation, the third edition of his textbook, Fundamentals of Process Control Theory, has been revised and updated for digital applications; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Murrill was the recipient of numerous awards and honors that include being named as a Distinguished Member of Phi Kappa Phi, as one of the "Top 100" best educators in the USA by Change Magazine, and among the Outstanding Young Men in America and Who's Who in America; and

WHEREAS, his intellectual acumen garnered recognition and inclusion in thirteen prestigious honorary and professional associations that included the LSU Alumni Hall of Fame and the Ole Miss Alumni Hall of Fame; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Murrill was honored by his contemporaries with receipt of the Halliburton Award for Excellence in Engineering Teaching and the Andrew M. Lockett Award from the Louisiana Engineering Society; and he was named one of the Fifty Most

Influential People in History by the International Society of Automation for his contributions to the disciplines of automation, instrumentation, and control technologies; and

WHEREAS, many nonprofit agencies benefitted from his guidance including the Baton Rouge Food Bank and the Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady; and

WHEREAS, as a man of unfaltering faith, Paul Murrill was a Sunday school teacher and lifelong member and deacon of the University Baptist Church; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Murrill remained affiliated with the LSU faculty as chancellor emeritus and as professor emeritus of the department of Chemical Engineering, however LSU was always in his heart and he spoke on behalf of the university at every opportunity; and he and his wife, Nancy, established an endowment chair for distinguished professors in the history department; and

WHEREAS, Paul and his beloved wife, Nancy, forged a life of love, travel, and adventure that lasted nearly six decades; they were blessed with three sons and eleven grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Paul Murrill was a generous man possessing an abundance of interests and skills, whose intellect and leadership brought tremendous success to the LSU system, whose positive effects on the university are still prevalent, and whose memory shall remain one of humility, humanity, and compassionate.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express sincere condolences upon the passing of Paul Whitfield Murrill, PhD, former chancellor of Louisiana State University.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to his widow, Nancy W. Murrill.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Susan P. Montague.

DIGEST

SCR 121 Original 2018 Regular Session Claitor

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