

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 6

BY SENATOR MILKOVICH

A RESOLUTION

To commend Dr. Fred Lowery, retired pastor of First Baptist Church in Bossier City, Louisiana, and his wife, Leigh, upon the example the two have lived in accordance with the principles of a covenant marriage, through their faith and their love for each other and their God, and on his more than fifty years of preaching God's word.

WHEREAS, Fred Lynn Lowery was born March 16, 1943, to Fred L. and Esther Burkhalter Lowery, the second of four children, and the family resided in Montevallo, Alabama, in Shelby County; and

WHEREAS, early in his life, Fred Lowery dreamed of being an airline pilot, but his call to the ministry set him on an entirely different course; and

WHEREAS, in 1960 at the tender age of seventeen, he was called as the pastor of Bethel Baptist Church in Aiken, South Carolina; and

WHEREAS, Fred Lowery received his bachelor of art's degree from Samford University, in suburban Birmingham, Alabama, earned a Master of Theology in 1969 from Southwest Baptist Theological Seminary in Forth Worth, Texas, and his Doctor of Ministry from Luther Rice University, which, at the time of his graduation, was located in Jacksonville, Florida; and

WHEREAS, after his studies at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Dr. Lowery served at that institution of learning for two years as a teaching fellow in evangelism; and

WHEREAS, in 1971 while a student at the University of Mississippi in Oxford,

Mississippi, Lisabeth Leigh Jones attended a revival at the Baptist church because there was going to be a young singer there whose tapes would be available, and Leigh met both the Lord and her future husband, Fred Lowery, that night; and

WHEREAS, Leigh Lowery also says that she and her father were both saved that night as the evangelist preached on how to be happy and to stay married in this world of secular focus, and Leigh and Fred Lowery have put those skills to good use in their forty-four year marriage, which began on June 2, 1974; and

WHEREAS, early in their marriage, the Lowerys vowed to have a date night every week, and the couple has continued that practice throughout most of their married years; and

WHEREAS, the couple treasured the years of raising their two daughters, Christy Camille and Shelby Lynn, and now enjoy their grandchildren and treasure all chances to be with their extended family; and

WHEREAS, in 1983 after pastoring and preaching in several churches, Reverend Fred Lowery was called to bring his wife and family and his considerable talents, especially in preaching and evangelism, to serve as pastor of First Baptist Church of Bossier City where he would spend the next thirty years; and

WHEREAS, shortly after the Lowerys' arrival in 1984, a fire erupted in the baptistry and the following two years involved both pastoring the congregation and rebuilding the damaged area, which was completed in 1986; and

WHEREAS, since that devastating event in 1984, First Baptist has added a worship center with twenty-five hundred seats, remodeled every building on the original campus, purchased additional land, and added a state-of-the-art preschool building named "Tiny Town"; and

WHEREAS, over those years, Reverend Fred Lowery employed his spiritual leadership and faith to preach the word of God to a congregation that numbered more than seven thousand Christians at the time he retired on January 1, 2014, after a career of more than fifty-three years of preaching and religious study; and

WHEREAS, Leigh Lowery eased the pressures of being a mother and a pastor's wife by building friendships with other women, and, at First Baptist, her once-a-week 5:00 a.m. group of ladies led to a women's ministry seminar, which, at its height, attracted more than

two thousand participants annually; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Lowery is widely known for his fresh insight as he communicates the truth of Christianity in many practical ways, and his sermons tend to focus on the themes of faith, family, and friends; and

WHEREAS, during his career, Reverend Lowery served as president of the Louisiana Baptist Convention, the Southern Baptist Convention's pastors' conference, as vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention, and as a trustee of both Louisiana College and the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Lowery reached beyond his church congregation and through his televised series, *First Word*, which began airing on a local television station in June, 1983, and is now carried by Direct TV service, has been estimated to be seen in more than fifteen million homes each week; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Fred Lowery is a gifted author, and his first book was published in 2002 and entitled *Covenant Marriage: Staying Together for Life*, which has been followed by additional titles, all dealing with the day-to-day commitment of being a Christian and living the word of God in a modern society that presents a distinct challenge of living a religious life each day; and

WHEREAS, from that lovely June day in 1974 when Fred and Leigh Lowery pledged their lives to each other and to God, they have lived the principles and suggestions contained in much of what Dr. Lowery has written, especially his writings on a covenant marriage, making his message all the more powerful as he and Leigh and their life together are a testament to those principles of marriage contained in his writings; and

WHEREAS, since his first call to preach and pastor a church in 1960 through his retirement in 2014 and his subsequent assignments as guest preacher, Reverend Fred Lynn Lowery, with the support and assistance of wife Leigh, has more than fulfilled his promise to preach the gospel by growing the First Baptist Church of Bossier City to an institution that includes more than seven thousand members, providing guidance that brought about the establishment of a preschool associated with the church, reaching an audience far beyond his pastorate through his television ministry, and writing books to inspire Christians to live their beliefs every day, all exceptional accomplishments for a single lifetime.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend Dr. Fred Lowery, retired pastor of First Baptist Church in Bossier City, Louisiana, and his wife, Leigh, upon the example the two have provided living together in accordance with the principles of a covenant marriage, through their faith and their love for each other and their God and on his more than fifty years of preaching God's word.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Dr. Fred and Mrs. Leigh Lowery.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE