

2015 Regular Session

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 51

BY SENATORS BUFFINGTON, ADLEY, PEACOCK AND TARVER

COMMENDATIONS. Commends James K. Elrod for 50 years of dynamic and innovative leadership as president of Willis-Knighton Health System.

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To commend James K. Elrod, president and chief executive officer of Willis-Knighton Heath System, on achieving the milestone of fifty years of continuous leadership as well as for earning the distinction of being the longest-serving hospital administrator in the United States.

WHEREAS, Mr. Elrod arrived at Willis-Knighton Memorial Hospital as a twenty-seven year old with a master's degree in hospital administration from the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, Missouri; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Elrod began his college education in Waco, Texas, where he earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Baylor University in 1959, and upon graduation, he joined the United States Air Force; and

WHEREAS, following his military service, Mr. Elrod completed a residency in hospital administration at Baptist Medical Center in Jackson, Mississippi, at which time he also attended Mississippi College of Law; and

WHEREAS, equipped with his degree in hospital administration and five years of post-graduate education and experience, in April 1965, Mr. Elrod was chosen to lead Willis-Knighton Memorial Hospital, finding a struggling sixty-five bed hospital much in need of energetic leadership; and

1 WHEREAS, for the next fifty years, Mr. Elrod remained deeply committed to
2 building an excellent hospital system and dedicated to the service of its community and its
3 patients, particularly reaching out to provide medical services to the underserved; and

4 WHEREAS, today Mr. Elrod presides over a flourishing healthcare system,
5 comprised of the original facility and three satellite hospitals, a retirement center, The Oaks,
6 an extended care center, and a hospital-owned health maintenance organization, a system
7 that boasts a total of more than twelve hundred skilled nursing beds, three hundred fifty
8 physician employees, and over six thousand employees who served more than fifty-three
9 thousand patients in 2014; and

10 WHEREAS, while devoting his professional efforts to the modernization and growth
11 of Willis-Knighton, Mr. Elrod generously gave his time and attention to improving his
12 community as a whole; and

13 WHEREAS, *The Shreveport Times* named Mr. Elrod as one of the most influential
14 people in the Arkansas-Louisiana-Texas (Ark-La-Tex) region during the Twentieth Century
15 in a listing marking the transition to the Twenty-first Century; and

16 WHEREAS, in January 2011, Mr. Elrod was honored by the United Way of
17 Northwest Louisiana with the Clyde Fant Award which recognizes an individual who has
18 contributed to the area through long-term volunteer efforts; and

19 WHEREAS, in 2012, Mr. Elrod received the Distinguished Alumnus Award from
20 Washington University, honoring him as a graduate who through his career has supported
21 and advanced healthcare and served as a preceptor and mentor to those entering the field of
22 healthcare administration; and

23 WHEREAS, Mr. Elrod is a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives
24 (FACHE) and in 2013 the ACHE recognized him as the longest serving hospital
25 administrator in the nation with, at the time, forty-eight years as the president of Willis-
26 Knighton; and

27 WHEREAS, under the guidance of Mr. Elrod, Willis-Knighton as an entity has
28 become an active philanthropic leader in northwest Louisiana, with a long list of activities
29 in which the hospital has invested, including providing funds for minority/police
30 management training, equipment and vehicles for the police, funds for the Reserve/Auxiliary

1 police program, funds for jet skis for the fire department's water rescue program, providing
2 cardiac monitors and defibrillators, UHF hospital radios, a medic unit, and SPRINT (single
3 paramedic rapid intervention, nontransport) vehicles for the fire department; and

4 WHEREAS, Willis-Knighton focuses its philanthropic efforts also in areas that
5 enhance the quality of life in the community, including sponsorship of the Shreveport
6 Symphony and Louisiana Public Broadcasting; and

7 WHEREAS, through Project NeighborHealth, Mr. Elrod fulfilled his vision of
8 bringing quality healthcare out of the hospital building to medically underserved areas,
9 making Willis-Knighton a presence in these communities; and

10 WHEREAS, currently, Project NeighborHealth operates three clinics, two in
11 Shreveport neighborhoods and one in Bradley, Arkansas; and

12 WHEREAS, Project NeighborHealth also operates a children's dental clinic staffed
13 by volunteer dentists that focus on children who do not qualify for government dental
14 coverage and whose parents cannot afford dental care in the private sector; and

15 WHEREAS, additionally, Project NeighborHealth operates a wellness center with,
16 what is believed to be the first in the nation, fitness center with low membership fees; and

17 WHEREAS, as a testament to all that can be attributed to the efforts and dedication
18 of Mr. Elrod to his job and his community and in recognition of his support for education
19 in health administration, Louisiana State University in Shreveport named the James K. Elrod
20 School of Health Administration in his honor; and

21 WHEREAS, with the recruitment of a young, aggressive, and energetic James K.
22 Elrod, Willis-Knighton Memorial Hospital brought to the Ark-La-Tex region a person who
23 has positively impacted this area for fifty years, bringing quality healthcare to thousands of
24 previously underserved people and areas and becoming an example for all of the power of
25 commitment and dedication to improving the lives of generations living in the northwest
26 corner of Louisiana and for generations yet to be served.

27 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
28 commend James K. Elrod for fifty years of dynamic and innovative service as the president
29 and chief executive officer of Willis-Knighton Memorial Hospital in Shreveport, Louisiana.

30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to

1 James K. Elrod, FACHE.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Mary Dozier O'Brien.

	DIGEST	
SCR 51 Original	2015 Regular Session	Buffington

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