

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 51

BY SENATORS BUFFINGTON, ADLEY, PEACOCK AND TARVER AND
REPRESENTATIVES BURFORD, HENRY BURNS, BURRELL,
CARMODY, MIKE JOHNSON, JIM MORRIS, NORTON,
REYNOLDS, SEABAUGH AND PATRICK WILLIAMS

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To commend James K. Elrod, president and chief executive officer of Willis-Knighton Health 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

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

WHEREAS, today Mr. Elrod presides over a flourishing healthcare system, comprised of the original facility and three satellite hospitals, a retirement center, The Oaks, an extended care center, and a hospital-owned health maintenance organization, a system

that boasts a total of more than twelve hundred skilled nursing beds, three hundred fifty physician employees, and over six thousand employees who served more than fifty-three thousand patients in 2014; and

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

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, under the guidance of Mr. Elrod, Willis-Knighton as an entity has become an active philanthropic leader in northwest Louisiana, with a long list of activities in which the hospital has invested, including providing funds for minority/police management training, equipment and vehicles for the police, funds for the Reserve/Auxiliary police program, funds for jet skis for the fire department's water rescue program, providing cardiac monitors and defibrillators, UHF hospital radios, a medic unit, and SPRINT (single paramedic rapid intervention, nontransport) vehicles for the fire department; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to James K. Elrod, FACHE.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES