

2015 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 104

BY SENATORS NEVERS, DONAHUE, ERDEY AND WHITE

COMMENDATIONS. Commends Gordon Burgess, Tangipahoa Parish President, on his thirty-two years of public service to the parish and for his many contributions to the state of Louisiana.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To commend the Honorable Gordon Burgess, Tangipahoa Parish President, for his years of
3 meritorious public service to the citizens of Tangipahoa Parish, the state of
4 Louisiana, and the nation, and to recognize his many accomplishments.

5 WHEREAS, it is with great admiration that Gordon Burgess is considered "the face
6 of Tangipahoa Parish" having served eight terms as parish president; as a well-respected
7 pacesetter within the Florida Parishes, his leadership, fiscal responsibility, and foresight have
8 accelerated economic growth and his realignment of local agencies has produced a more
9 efficient delivery of essential services; and

10 WHEREAS, the extraordinary efforts of Gordon Burgess have propelled the parish
11 forward with highway network expansion, drainage improvements, fire protection, libraries,
12 health units, and new governmental facilities; and

13 WHEREAS, these enhancements were based upon solid conservative management
14 principles of careful budgeting, resourceful planning, hard work, and a constant focus on the
15 objective at hand; and

16 WHEREAS, Gordon Burgess was elected as the first parish president in 1986 when
17 the police jury system was replaced with a home rule charter; he has fulfilled his election
18 promise, which was to make local government more viable, accountable, and transparent;

1 and

2 WHEREAS, he introduced innovative fiscal methods such as "Pay As You Go", a
3 financial plan, which was almost unheard of in government, to reduce bond indebtedness and
4 to capture state and federal monies to fund major infrastructure improvements, highway
5 resurfacing, bridge repair, railroad safety, tourism, and emergency preparedness; and

6 WHEREAS, best known for his "can do" attitude, Gordon Burgess has served as
7 either chairman or member of the State Board of Commerce and Industry, the Pontchartrain
8 Causeway Commission, the Police Jury Association, the Zachary Taylor Parkway
9 Association, the Louisiana Federal Property Advisory Board, Parishes Against Coastal
10 Erosion, the Amite Rotary Club, the Hammond, Ponchatoula, and Amite chambers of
11 commerce, and the Louisiana Cattlemen's Association; and

12 WHEREAS, in 1982, during the administration of Governor David C. Treen, he was
13 appointed as chairman of the Louisiana State Racing Commission; under his leadership, the
14 commission regained its credibility and respectability when Burgess led the fight to secure
15 funding for a Louisiana State Police investigative unit assigned to the horse racing industry,
16 and his other reforms improved racetrack safety for both horses and jockeys; and

17 WHEREAS, often the mettle of man is tested under the most horrific circumstances;
18 in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Gordon Burgess exemplified self-reliance, altruism,
19 and dedication; he took command of recovery efforts at the Emergency Operations Center,
20 and he lived the on premises for one month, not to return home until the parish had regained
21 a measurable portion of basic services and utilities; and

22 WHEREAS, it is said that behind every great man is an even greater woman;
23 Margaret Morgan Burgess, his wife of sixty-one years, stood by his side through this crisis,
24 cooking two meals per day for volunteers and emergency responders while Gordon worked
25 out the logistics of acquisition and distribution of supplies to those in need; they faced this
26 struggle like any other, together as a team; and

27 WHEREAS, his diligence has brought to fruition numerous projects such as the
28 Florida Parishes Arena, two additional parish health units, animal control facilities,
29 award-winning environmental landfill management, Smart 911, housing assistance, and
30 enhanced law enforcement capabilities; and

1 WHEREAS, Gordon Burgess is most content when he is "working for the people",
2 no matter what that undertaking may be; fellow public servants seek his counsel on difficult
3 issues of the day, and Gordon remains a patient mentor for novice statesmen to foster their
4 interest in government and to school them on the finer points of diplomacy; and

5 WHEREAS, Gordon Burgess honorably served his country assigned to a Nike
6 Missile installation while in the United States Army and also served four years on active
7 reserve status in the Louisiana National Guard; and

8 WHEREAS, Gordon and Margaret are active members of the First Baptist Church
9 in Independence where he serves as deacon and she serves in the music ministry; and the
10 couple was honored to be chosen to reign as Oyster King and Oyster Pearl at the 2013 Amite
11 Oyster Festival; and

12 WHEREAS, his qualities of tenacity, energy, compassion, sincerity, and generosity
13 of spirit have served him well in public life; after thirty-two years, Gordon Burgess still
14 maintains the trust and respect of his staff, colleagues, and constituency; and

15 WHEREAS, Gordon Burgess exemplifies all the finest qualities of a proficient,
16 parochial government leader who continuously pursues the best interests of those he serves;
17 his effective leadership and exemplary accomplishments are reflected in the economic
18 prosperity and well-being that the parish now enjoys.

19 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana
20 does hereby commend Parish President Gordon Burgess on his performance of invaluable
21 public service for the grateful citizens of Tangipahoa Parish, the state of Louisiana, and the
22 nation.

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does
24 hereby express its sincerest appreciation for his lifetime of dedication and leadership and
25 sincerely extends best wishes for success and happiness in the next chapter of his life.

26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
27 Honorable Gordon Burgess, president of Tangipahoa Parish.

