SLS 16RS-1767 ORIGINAL

2016 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 88

BY SENATOR HEWITT

COMMENDATIONS. Commends Margaret Narcisse Laurant upon the occasion of her ninetieth birthday.

1	A RESOLUTION
2	To commend Margaret Narcisse Laurant upon the occasion of her ninetieth birthday.
3	WHEREAS, Margaret Narcisse Laurant was born on May 18, 1926 in Bonfouca,
4	Louisiana, a settlement where Slidell is today, to Jean Narcisse and Elmonia
5	Vignaul-Pichon; and
6	WHEREAS, the ancestors of Margaret's husband, Norvell Laurant, initially settled
7	in Bayon Castine, which is today Mandeville, Louisiana, and later established the permanent
8	settlement of Bonfouca; and
9	WHEREAS, these ancestors, were closely allied with the Acalopissa, Choctaw, and
10	Alabamos Indians, who lived in this area before the coming of the French settlers; and
11	WHEREAS, Laurant's ancestors established Bonfouca and invited other French
12	families to join them and many families made this settlement their home, including the
13	Narcisse, Carriere, Dubuisson, Galatas, Pichon and Vignaul families; and
14	WHEREAS, at Bonfouca, many of the families married into one another and
15	maintained a close relationship with the Acalopissa, Choctaw, and Alabamos families; and
16	WHEREAS, in the early twentieth century, no formal provisions were made for
17	educating children of color, however, in the 1920's a one-room schoolhouse named "Golden
18	Key" was founded and served as an elementary school for the children of Bonfouca; and

1	WHEREAS, Margaret Narcisse attended elementary school at Golden Key and
2	attended middle school at St. Tammany Parish Training School for Negroes, which provided
3	education beyond the elementary years; and
4	WHEREAS, the long walk from the bayou area to the training school discouraged
5	Margaret and she soon left school seeking full-time employment to help support her parents
6	and nine siblings; and
7	WHEREAS, in the 1940's Margaret Narcisse met and fell in love with Norvell
8	Laurant and they were married on January 2, 1946, in Lake Charles, Louisiana; and
9	WHEREAS, soon after their marriage, Margaret and Norvell left Bonfouca for
10	Columbus, Ohio, where Norvell was stationed with the United States Army Air Force; and
11	WHEREAS, Norvell's Army Air Force assignment at Lockbourne Army Air Force
12	Base in Ohio brought the Laurants in contact with General Benjamin Davis, one of the
13	Tuskegee Airman from World War II and the first African American to reach the rank of
14	general, who was the commander of the 477th Composite Group, an African-American
15	flying unit; and
16	WHEREAS, Margaret lovingly supported her husband in his military service, but
17	both longed for home and when Norvell was honorably discharged, the couple returned to
18	Slidell where Norvell built a house for their family, a home where Margaret continues to live
19	today; and
20	WHEREAS, the Laurants raised seven children: Floyd, Daniel, Reginald, Margaret
21	"Mel", Johanna, Norvell Jr. and Cyril, who are both now deceased; and
22	WHEREAS, Margaret raised their family with strong Christian values and she and
23	Norvell emphasized the importance of education and of giving back to their community; and
24	WHEREAS, eventually Mrs. Laurant, determined to pursue her education, enrolled
25	in evening classes at St. Tammany High School, while continuing to work full time; and
26	WHEREAS, with her newly-acquired education, Margaret worked as a government
27	subcontractor at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) operation in
28	New Orleans where she had the privilege of meeting the first two African-American
29	astronauts, Guion Bluford, the first African American to travel into space, and Ronald
30	McNair, who was later killed in the Challenger disaster in January, 1986; and

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1	WHEREAS, Margaret Laurant still lives in the house on Effie Street that her husband
2	built for her and their family, repaired after damage from Hurricane Katrina, and she
3	continues to enjoy the love and warmth of her large family; and
4	WHEREAS, in May, 2016, Margaret's children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren,
5	other family and dear friends will gather to celebrate her ninetieth birthday, which is May
6	18, 2016, and to honor the life she has lived; and
7	WHEREAS, Margaret Narcisse Laurant's life has spanned tumultuous times of social
8	and technological change in America and in Louisiana and Margaret was both a witness to
9	and participant in them; from the bringing of education to African-American children and
10	the integration of American society to putting African-American astronauts into space; and
11	WHEREAS, throughout the tumult and ongoing advancement, Margaret Narcisse
12	Laurant led by example and through this she and Norvell brought their family the realization
13	of the American dream; improved education, greater prosperity, and an appreciation for
14	strength and formidable courage and for the Christian values by which she continues to live
15	today.
16	THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana
17	does hereby commend Margaret Narcisse Laurant upon the occasion of her ninetieth
18	birthday.
19	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to
20	Margaret Narcisse Laurant.

**DIGEST** SR 88 Original 2016 Regular Session

Hewitt

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of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Mary Dozier O'Brien.