

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

