

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 82

BY SENATORS GATTI AND PEACOCK

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To commend Janet Burks, Bossier Parish Registrar of Voters, upon the occasion of her retirement scheduled for May 31, 2016, after an impressive forty-five year career of service.

WHEREAS, Janet Burks, a lifelong resident of Northwest Louisiana, began her career in the Bossier Parish registrar's office in 1971 and has not missed working an election since first employed; and

WHEREAS, since 1971, Burks has worked in twelve gubernatorial elections and eleven presidential elections, among countless local, special and tax elections; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Burks, as registrar, has been responsible for conducting five of those gubernatorial contests and five presidential elections, all of which ran smoothly; and

WHEREAS, when she began at the registrar's office, Janet Burks reflects that voters were required to appear in person at the registrar's office in order to register to vote and the person's address was located on large maps that indicated the wards, precincts and districts in the parish to determine their polling location; and

WHEREAS, currently, voter registration has moved out of the registrar's office to include the Department of Motor Vehicles, public assistance agencies, libraries, high schools and college campuses, as well as online, bringing the registrar to the public rather than the public having to come to the registrar; and

WHEREAS, the process of assembling the voter rolls has also changed with the technological and electronic advances over the last forty-five years and Ms. Burks recalls that registration records in 1971 were hard copies of the registration application that contained the name, address and party affiliation of the voter; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Burks reports that now the applications of voters are scanned into a statewide electronic system, ERIN, a useful tool for maintaining records and tracking registered voters statewide and facilitating communication among registrars; and

WHEREAS, in 1984, the registrar's office began conducting absentee voting on a

limited basis and Ms. Burks states that this process of voting before the actual election date is now available to any registered voter, known as the "No Excuse Voting" program, both significant changes in the manner in which elections in Louisiana are conducted; and

WHEREAS, Janet Burks was named registrar in 1997 and she has given credit for much of the success of the office under her leadership to her staff whom she describes as "phenomenal"; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Burks is understandably proud of the "Over 65" program that allows those age sixty-five and over to receive ballots at home, mark their vote on the ballot and return it by mail, never having to leave their home; and

WHEREAS, during her tenure as registrar, Ms. Burks served as president of the Registrar of Voters Association and was honored by the association in 2015 with the coveted Seminar Dedication Award; and

WHEREAS, as she sought to bring increased professionalism to her public service as registrar, Janet Burks sought and obtained the well-respected designation of Certified Elections Registration Administrator; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Burks has described the registrar's office as her second home and she will be greatly missed by her staff and all those who work in the parish offices in Benton, Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Burks worked tirelessly to update her office and has been adept at keeping pace with the changing practices in voter registration and the conducting of elections on a local level; and

WHEREAS, through a wide range of changes, increased responsibilities, and evolving technology, Janet Burks, putting her exceptional leadership skills to use, has operated the registrar's office with professionalism, honor and integrity; and

WHEREAS, Janet Burks leaves public service with Bossier Parish with an admirable legacy of commitment to increasing voter participation and maintaining the integrity of the election process, essential principles key to the functioning of a true American democracy.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend Bossier Parish Registrar of Voters, Janet Burks, upon the occasion of her retirement after forty-five years of exemplary service.

**SCR NO. 82**

**ENROLLED**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to  
Ms. Janet Burks.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES