

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 142

BY SENATORS ALARIO, ALLAIN, APPEL, BARROW, BISHOP, BOUDREAUX, CARTER, CLAITOR, COLOMB, CORTEZ, DONAHUE, ERDEY, FANNIN, GATTI, HENSGENS, HEWITT, JOHNS, LAFLEUR, LAMBERT, LONG, LUNEAU, MARTINY, MILKOVICH, MILLS, MIZELL, MORRELL, MORRISH, PEACOCK, PETERSON, PRICE, RISER, GARY SMITH, JOHN SMITH, TARVER, THOMPSON, WALSWORTH, WARD AND WHITE

A RESOLUTION

To commend the Honorable Norbèrt Nolty "Norby" Chabert, State Senator, for his years of exemplary public service in the Louisiana Legislature and to express appreciation for his many contributions made on behalf of his constituents and the citizens of the state of Louisiana.

WHEREAS, upon winning a special election in 2009, Norby Chabert hit the ground running as perhaps the most experienced and savvy freshman senator that had not previously held political office; and

WHEREAS, Norby represents Senatorial District 20 "down the bayou" encompassing the coastal regions of Terrebonne and Lafourche parishes, previously represented by his father, the late Leonard J. Chabert (1980-1991) and brother, Marty J. Chabert (1992-1996); and

WHEREAS, together, they were honored by the Louisiana Political Hall of Fame in 2013 with the inaugural "Louisiana Political Family of Officeholders Award"; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure in the Louisiana Senate, Norby has served as chair and vice chair of the Committee on Natural Resources, chair of the Select Committee on Vocational and Technical Education, vice chair of the Committee on Finance, and as a member of the Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection and International Affairs, the Committee on Judiciary B, the Committee on Retirement, the Committee on Health and Welfare, and the Joint Legislative Committee on the Budget, among others; and

WHEREAS, honoring his rural upbringing down the bayou, Senator Chabert joined the Louisiana Rural Caucus and the Acadiana Delegation; and

WHEREAS, his first year in the Senate was punctuated by the Deepwater Horizon

oil spill which had a devastating impact on all aspects of his coastal district, an area that balances jobs in the oil and gas service industry with one of the nation's most productive seafood estuaries and a hub of commercial and recreational fishing activities, and he worked tirelessly to bring recovery to this area; and

WHEREAS, Port Fourchon, located on the southernmost point of Lafourche Parish, is the largest energy port in the world, servicing more than ninety percent of deepwater activity in the Gulf of Mexico; and

WHEREAS, Norby has championed the expansion of Port Fourchon, Port Terrebonne, and all other Louisiana ports, deepening and dredging projects throughout the state through capital outlay projects, creating the Waterway Dredging and Deepening Priority Program, and establishing the office of multimodal commerce; and

WHEREAS, in creating the office of multimodal commerce, Senator Chabert's strategic vision of building the state's infrastructure in coordination with the needs of business and industry, while acting as a conduit for stakeholders to influence public priorities, was realized; and

WHEREAS, throughout his career in the Senate, Norby stood as an unwavering advocate of higher education and job training as the standard-bearer for his alma mater, Nicholls State University and the Fletcher Technical Community College; and

WHEREAS, during tough budget times, he zealously protected these institutions and even improved campus infrastructure with construction of a state-of-the-art building, now home to the Chef John Folse Culinary Institute at Nicholls State University, which offers one of the few culinary arts four-year degree programs in the country; and

WHEREAS, witnessing the many life experiences of family and friends, Norby has developed a passion for healthcare, particularly care for those on the lower end of the economic spectrum; and

WHEREAS, when a change in federal policy regarding reimbursements dictated that the old charity hospital system could not survive in its current form, Norby played a key role in the creation of the public-private healthcare partnership widely considered as the model for others to emulate, preserved the healthcare safety net, and kept the Leonard J. Chabert Medical Center - renamed in honor of its founder and Norby's father in 1992 - in Houma

open; and

WHEREAS, embracing his French heritage, he has strongly supported CODOFIL through the years; and

WHEREAS, always looking for opportunities to improve the efficiency of government, Senator Chabert cut through yards of red tape by allowing the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism to utilize private vendors for services and kept many state parks open to the public; and

WHEREAS, spending most of his life on the banks of Bayou Little Caillou, Norby has personally experienced the coastal land loss and survived numerous hurricanes and floods that have repeatedly devastated his area, in a way few outside of the region can comprehend; and

WHEREAS, throughout his tenure in the Senate, Norby has been the most vocal and knowledgeable advocate for hurricane protection and coastal restoration projects, while immersing himself in the policies and priorities of the coast; and

WHEREAS, through his leadership and decade of service on the Senate Natural Resources Committee and as the Senate's representative on the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority Board, Norby has positively impacted these policies and priorities by enacting much needed reforms; and

WHEREAS, his personal experiences with hurricanes, storm surge, saltwater intrusion, and coastal erosion had a direct impact on Norby's decision to seek the vacant Senate District 20 seat in 2009; and

WHEREAS, he graduated from South Terrebonne High School and attended the University of Louisiana at Lafayette (ULL); and

WHEREAS, while attending ULL, Norby created many lifelong friendships and grew to appreciate the beauty and unique culture of the prairie region of Acadiana; and

WHEREAS, despite his love for ULL, the bayou called him home, and Norby transferred to his beloved Nicholls State University, participating in student government, theater, and intramural sports, while graduating with a bachelor's degree in government; and

WHEREAS, two of his greatest life experiences during this period included studying abroad in Costa Rica and running with the bulls in Spain; and

WHEREAS, soon after graduation, Norby moved to New Orleans and began his career as a political consultant working for candidates of both parties in statewide and congressional campaigns; and

WHEREAS, as a consultant, a bipartisan spirit was ignited in Norby where, as an elected official, he always sought to find common ground, seek out pragmatic compromises, and ensure that government meets the needs of the people in a fiscally responsible manner; and

WHEREAS, living in New Orleans in August of 2005, Norby was one of the last evacuees to leave prior to Hurricane Katrina making landfall and overwhelming the city; and

WHEREAS, after the storm subsided, Norby relocated to his hometown of Chauvin and four weeks later found himself flooded out, along with more than ten thousand other residents of lower Terrebonne Parish, by the devastating storm surge resulting from Hurricane Rita's impact to the west; and

WHEREAS, in 2008, his home and community were once again ravaged by back-to-back Category Four Hurricanes Gustav and Ike; and

WHEREAS, while previously content in private life, Norby was compelled by these disasters to make a difference through public service; and

WHEREAS, Norby is the son of the late Leonard J. Chabert and Viona Lapeyrouse Chabert, and the brother of Donna, Marty, Lori, and Lenny, and their spouses O'Neal, Elodie, Kirby, and Patti, respectively, and uncle to numerous nieces and nephews, as well as a growing number of great-nieces and nephews; and

WHEREAS, Norby loves to garden and frequently utilizes his produce when he cooks at family gatherings and community events; and

WHEREAS, participation in local civic clubs and charitable organizations such as the Colonel Athletic Association, the Krewe of Houmas, the Knights of Columbus, the Rougaroo Festival, and the Chabert Foundation are activities he particularly enjoys; and

WHEREAS, as Norby's tenure in the Senate comes to an end, he is comforted by the many relationships he has made with colleagues, staff, and other members of the capitol community, as well as the honor of serving, not only his people down the bayou, but all the citizens of the great state of Louisiana.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend the Honorable Norbèrt "Norby" Nolty Chabert for his faithful public service to this body, his district, and the state of Louisiana and does hereby extend to him the best wishes of his colleagues for continued success in his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the distinguished legislator, Senator Norby Chabert, Louisiana Senatorial District 20.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE