

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 153

BY SENATOR HEWITT

A RESOLUTION

To commend and congratulate the Philanthropic Educational Organization (P.E.O.) for 100 years of service and to welcome members to the 75th state convention in Shreveport, Louisiana, in June 2022.

WHEREAS, the Louisiana state chapter of the P.E.O. was organized with seventeen members in Shreveport, Louisiana, on May 15, 1922, and the sisterhood has grown in Louisiana to over 1,800 members and more than fifty active chapters throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana's P.E.O. chapters are part of the larger organization that is active throughout the United States and Canada; and

WHEREAS, founded on January 21, 1869, at Iowa Wesleyan University, the P.E.O. Sisterhood is one of the oldest women's organizations in North America; and

WHEREAS, the organization was established as a college sorority by seven college women who had a desire to preserve their friendship and it quickly transitioned into a city organization; and

WHEREAS, P.E.O. is an international, philanthropic, educational organization dedicated to women and has a North American membership of over 225,000; there are active members in P.E.O. chapters throughout each of the fifty states, six Canadian provinces, and the District of Columbia; and

WHEREAS, the members of P.E.O. take tremendous pride in their mission to celebrate the advancement of women through scholarships, grants, awards, and loans, as well as their stewardship of P.E.O. owned Cottey College, a baccalaureate-granting liberal arts and sciences institution for women located in Nevada, Missouri; and

WHEREAS, Cottey College was founded in 1926 by Mrs. Virginia Alice Cottey who was 78 years old when she received an invitation to join Chapter DW of the P.E.O.

Sisterhood; though she thought she was too old to become a new member, the educational purpose of the organization appealed to her and she thought she might add value to the sisterhood from her many years of experience in founding an institution of higher education; and

WHEREAS, in November 1926, the chapter's education day program revealed the extent of the organization's philanthropic contributions that were all dedicated to women and it was at that moment when Mrs. Cottey received a revelation that P.E.O. would be the perfect steward of Cottey College; and

WHEREAS, on the platform of the 1927 convention of the P.E.O.'s Supreme Chapter, Virginia Alice Cottey Stockard presented her life's work to the Sisterhood proposing that P.E.O. accept the deed for Cottey with no debt; and though her proposal was met with shock and surprise, it was announced that a majority of the delegates, realizing the opportunity for greater service, voted to accept her offer; and

WHEREAS, for more than 90 years, the College, its alumnae, and the P.E.O. Sisterhood have worked together to realize Virginia Alice Cottey Stockard's assertion that women should have excellent educational opportunities; and

WHEREAS, more than 116,000 women seeking opportunities in higher education have received hundreds of millions of dollars through the projects of the P.E.O. Sisterhood; and in addition to offering financial support, P.E.O.s are passionate about motivating women to achieve their highest aspirations, setting out to empower women, and promote world peace through education; and

WHEREAS, in June 2022, the Louisiana P.E.O. chapters will gather for the 75th state convention in Shreveport, Louisiana, to celebrate 100 years of service in Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, at the 2022 state convention, the business of the state sisterhood will be conducted, ideas will be exchanged, and objectives will be made for the next generations to build upon.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend the Philanthropic Educational Organization Sisterhood upon the occasion of its centennial anniversary and congratulate the Louisiana P.E.O. chapter on its 75th state convention.

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ENROLLED

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Louisiana Chapter of P.E.O.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE