

Regular Session, 2014

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 14

BY SENATOR MURRAY

COMMENDATIONS. Commends Sister Vera Butler, director of the St. Joseph Catholic Church Rebuild Center, upon receipt of the 2014 Hibernian of the Year Award.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To commend and congratulate Sister Vera Butler, director of the Rebuild Center at
3 St. Joseph Catholic Church of New Orleans, upon receipt of the Hibernian of the
4 Year Award for 2014 presented by the Louisiana Division of the Ancient Order of
5 Hibernians.

6 WHEREAS, Sister Vera Butler is a humble servant of Christ, a member of the Order
7 of Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a conduit of God's tender mercy,
8 a community organizer, and director of the Rebuild Center located at St. Joseph Catholic
9 Church, whose good works benefit the less fortunate and homeless in Mid-City; and

10 WHEREAS, born in County Kerry, Ireland, Sister Vera entered the Order of the
11 Presentation Sisters in 1970; since that time, her mission continues to be one of service to
12 the needs of those forgotten souls who cling to the margins of society; and

13 WHEREAS, Sister Vera is an unshakable optimist who operates the Rebuild Center,
14 a multi-service complex that provides the homeless with access to services vital to a return
15 to the workforce and a move off the streets to better living conditions; and

16 WHEREAS, as a collaborative effort of St. Joseph's Church, the Harry Tompson
17 Center at Immaculate Conception Church, the Archdiocese of New Orleans Hispanic
18 Apostolate, and the Presentation Sisters/Lantern Light ministry, the center creates a respite

1 that provides facilities for personal hygiene and laundry, a free lunch program that daily
2 feeds two hundred patrons, mail service, a neighborhood food pantry, telephone access,
3 medical care, legal assistance, necessary documentation and identification cards, and even
4 cultural enrichment; and

5 WHEREAS, Sister Vera, along with Sister Anna Ramone, Sister Dolores Cooney and
6 Sister Enid Story offer the downtrodden a modicum of peace, dignity, and hope, precious
7 commodities for those who feel shunned and left behind by society; and

8 WHEREAS, Sister Vera is a proactive community service dynamo of the highest
9 order; she solicits donations of funding, time, and hard work from private citizens,
10 businesses, and nonprofit organizations; the Lantern Light's annual fish fry is a fund-raiser
11 that brings out a pantheon of New Orleans finest culinary artists and celebrity chefs; and

12 WHEREAS, in 2006, Sister Vera was the recipient of the Catholic Extension Lumen
13 Christi Award for her work after Hurricane Katrina when she went door-to-door through
14 devastated neighborhoods to assist the impoverished; and

15 WHEREAS, from the Holy Bible's New Testament, in the book of Matthew, Chapter
16 Five, Verse Three, the first of The Beatitudes reads, *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs*
17 *is the kingdom of Heaven*; and

18 WHEREAS, Sister Vera's unshakable faith has helped many of those 'poor in spirit'
19 to recover their dignity; they come from every walk of life, those who have lost their way
20 through some unfortunate circumstance, and some of these stories do have happy endings,
21 due in no small part to the efforts of Sister Vera; and

22 WHEREAS, the Hibernian of the Year Award originated with the Ancient Order of
23 Hibernians, a fraternal organization, that promotes the interests and welfare of the Irish in
24 America; Sister Vera, who is a member of the women's auxiliary, the Ladies Ancient Order
25 of Hibernians in Louisiana, Margaret Haughery Division, will receive the award at the
26 annual St. Patrick's Day Banquet on March 17, 2014; and

27 WHEREAS, Sister Vera is the first woman to be so honored; and

28 WHEREAS, each year, the Ancient Order of Hibernians selects one person who best
29 represents the Order and its core beliefs; and like the beloved historic figure,
30 Margaret Haughery, Sister Vera Butler is a New Orleanian by choice who, through her love

1 of Christ, has embraced the lifelong vocation of helping others; and

2 WHEREAS, Sister Vera Butler personifies the finest character traits of goodness and
3 humanity; she assures the poor and despairing that there is hope for a brighter future; and
4 she continues the legacy of charity and philanthropy that is woven into the lengthy history
5 of the city of New Orleans.

6 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana
7 does hereby commend and congratulate Sister Vera Butler upon receipt of the Hibernian of
8 the Year Award for 2014.

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be transmitted to
10 Sister Vera Butler and the president of the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians,
11 Margaret Haughery Division.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Suzi Montague.

DIGEST

Murray

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