

By: The Entire Membership

To: Rules

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 99

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE ESTEEMED AND LAUDABLE
2 LEGISLATIVE CAREER AND PUBLIC SERVICE OF THE MOST HONORABLE AND
3 DISTINGUISHED GENTLEMAN FROM HARRISON, THE "IRONMAN," "DEAN" AND
4 "GODFATHER" OF THE MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE, SENATOR THOMAS ARLIN
5 "TOMMY" GOLLOTT, UPON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE
6 MISSISSIPPI SENATE.

7 WHEREAS, like Cy Young's 749 complete baseball games
8 pitched, Wilt Chamberlain's 100-point basketball game and Cal
9 Ripken, Jr.'s, 2,632 consecutive baseball games played, so too may
10 the record of the "Ironman," "Dean" and "Godfather" of the
11 Mississippi Legislature, all of which he is commonly referred,
12 Senator Thomas Arlin "Tommy" Gollott stands as the mace bearer of
13 legislative longevity, with 52 years of uninterrupted service as a
14 member of the Mississippi Legislature, having served in both the
15 House of Representatives and the Senate; and

16 WHEREAS, the honorable and distinguished Gentleman from
17 Harrison, Senator Thomas Arlin "Tommy" Gollott has announced his
18 plans for retirement from the Mississippi Senate at the conclusion
19 of the 2019 Regular Session of the Mississippi Legislature, after
20 tirelessly working on behalf of the citizens of Mississippi,



21 former House District 45 and current Senate District 50, both
22 situated in Harrison County from the historical and majestically
23 aesthetic, hallowed halls and ornate chambers of the Mississippi
24 State Capitol Building; and

25 WHEREAS, before assuming his first seat as a State Legislator
26 elected to the Mississippi House of Representatives from District
27 45 in 1967, Tommy Gollott, a graduate of the Jefferson Davis
28 Junior College, State College of Arkansas and the University of
29 Southern Mississippi, a former Amateur Athletic Union boxing champ
30 and organizer of the Happy Days Youth Boxing Club, was a savvy
31 businessman, as the owner and operator of the successful AAA
32 Transfer and Storage Company on the Mississippi Gulf Coast; and

33 WHEREAS, upon being sworn into office in July 1968 at 32
34 years of age, Tommy Gollott became the distinguished Gentleman
35 from Harrison and wasted no time requesting the legislation,
36 amendments and reports that would help effectuate into law the
37 ideologies and policy changes that his constituents had elected
38 him to further, and unbeknownst to him at the time, charting the
39 course to surpass the legislative record for longest tenure
40 established by former Speaker of the House Walter Sillers, Jr.,
41 who had served 50 consecutive years at the time of his passing on
42 September 24, 1966, a record that Gollott would surpass on
43 September 25, 2017; and

44 WHEREAS, for 12 years, Tommy Gollott's presence and impact as
45 a Democratic member of the House of Representatives was as far



46 reaching as his heart for the Gulf Coast and helping people is
47 big, as he championed legislation that would serve as a precursory
48 catalyst of the coastal tourism expansion, including being
49 instrumental in the building of the Mississippi Gulf Coast
50 Coliseum and Convention Center, the South Mississippi Retardation
51 Center in Long Beach, the purchase and preservation of 35,000
52 acres of the Pascagoula River System; and

53 WHEREAS, at the beginning of the 1980 Regular Session of the
54 Mississippi Legislature, former Representative Gollott assumed a
55 new title as Senator Gollott, and operating in said capacity for
56 the past 40 years, he has continued to serve as a bastion of hope
57 for the promotion of Mississippi's economic sector and continued
58 protection for the state's most vulnerable citizens, children with
59 intellectual and developmental impairments; and

60 WHEREAS, described by his daughter as a "bulldog at the
61 Legislature, but a compassionate, fun and disciplinarian as a
62 father" for whom they are appreciative, Senator Gollott continues
63 to maintain a keen eye on the promises of his native Biloxi's
64 future, as he adamantly maintains that he does not believe in
65 partisan politics, having gone on record as stating, "It shouldn't
66 be partisan; we need cooperation"; and

67 WHEREAS, as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Ports and
68 Marine Resources, Senator Gollott was a key player in turning a
69 small bureau under the umbrella of the Mississippi Department of
70 Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks into a separate agency now known as



71 the Department of Marine Resources in 1994, as well as being
72 credited with legislation authorizing dockside gaming in the early
73 1990s, which gave rise to a tourism and economic boom on the
74 Mississippi Gulf Coast and other areas of the state; and

75 WHEREAS, former President Pro Tempore of the Mississippi
76 Senate from 1996 to 2000, Senator Gollott's ascension to the ranks
77 of power began with key positions on various legislative
78 committees throughout the course of his five-decade tenure,
79 including: Appropriations, Economic Development, Elections,
80 Highways and Transportation, Local and Private, Rules, Tourism,
81 and as chairman of both the Ports and Marine Resources Committee
82 and the Joint Legislative Committee on Performance, Evaluation and
83 Expenditure Review (PEER); and

84 WHEREAS, the Senator's love and deeply felt respect for the
85 Legislature as a laboratory of democracy has led his fight to
86 preserve and nurture its integrity for all legislators who equally
87 hold a lion's share in the stake of advancing the direction of the
88 state's economic, educational and political climate; and

89 WHEREAS, not one to limit his community involvement to the
90 Legislature, Senator Gollott has always been active in his
91 district and dedicated to improving the quality of life for all
92 citizens, as evidenced by his service with the following: Gulf
93 Coast Movers Association; National Movers Conference of America;
94 National Defense Transportation Association; life member of the
95 National Society of State Legislators; Jaycee; Chamber of



96 Commerce; Boys and Girls Club; Mental Health and Retardation for
97 Harrison County; Knights of Columbus; Fleur De Lis Society; Gulf
98 Coast Hunting and Fishing; board member of Cheshire Home for
99 Handicapped; board member of Mississippi Arts Fair for
100 Handicapped; and Biloxi Elks Club; and

101 WHEREAS, the members of the Mississippi Legislature will
102 cherish the bond and common goals for the betterment of this great
103 state shared with the Honorable Senator Thomas Arlin "Tommy"
104 Gollott, and that his impeccable service was unparalleled to the
105 Mississippi Legislature and to the constituents of Senate District
106 50; and

107 WHEREAS, Senator Gollott has led and continues to lead a life
108 of bravery in the face of challenge, sincerity in the face of
109 apathy and honesty in the presence of deceit, and through it all,
110 this remarkable person has remained a phenomenal gentleman,
111 grounded in his integrity, who seeks to improve the lives of
112 others through positive example, hard work and the undeniable
113 truths of the Word of God; and

114 WHEREAS, the service of Senator Gollott would be without
115 honor but for the continued support, encouragement and love of his
116 family, who have endured the daunting struggles that accompany the
117 life of an elected official, and much credit is also due to his
118 loved ones who have sacrificed countless hours without him in
119 order to allow him to fulfill his legislative obligations,
120 including: his wife, Zelma Jackson Gollott; daughters, Tanya



121 Gollott Swoope, Lisa Gollott Lane and Jennifer Gollott Burke; and
122 his grandchildren; and

123 WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to honor the
124 indelible legacy of remarkable service of our colleague and
125 friend, Senator Tommy Gollott, whose service to the State of
126 Mississippi and this body abounds with honor and intrepid dignity:

127 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
128 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING
129 THEREIN, That we do hereby commend the esteemed and laudable
130 legislative career and public service of the most honorable,
131 distinguished and senior Gentleman from Harrison, Senator Thomas
132 Arlin "Tommy" Gollott, and express fondest respect and best wishes
133 for continued success in all of his future endeavors as he enjoys
134 the lighter years of life after his legislative retirement.

135 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be
136 furnished to Senator Thomas Arlin "Tommy" Gollott and to the
137 members of the Capitol Press Corps.

