

By: Representatives Guice, Anderson, Baria, To: Rules
Barton, Bennett, Busby, Ladner, Crawford,
DeLano, Eure, Haney, Patterson, Read,
Williams-Barnes, Willis, Zuber

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 124

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

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

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



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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

