

By: Senator(s) Tollison, Seymour, Dearing,
Kirby, Blackwell, Barnett, Blackmon, Blount,
Branning, Burton, Butler, Carmichael, Carter,
Caughman, Chassaniol, Clarke, DeBar, Dawkins,
Frazier, Harkins, Jackson (11th), Jackson
(32nd), McDaniel, Jordan, McMahan, Massey,
Moran, Norwood, Parks, Parker, Simmons
(12th), Simmons (13th), Turner-Ford, Watson,
Wilemon, Witherspoon

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 658

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE PUBLIC CAREER AND
2 RECOGNIZING THE LASTING LEGACY OF SENATOR TOMMY GOLLOTT, WHO IS
3 THE LONGEST-SERVING STATE LAWMAKER IN MISSISSIPPI HISTORY, ON THE
4 OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT.

5 WHEREAS, the longest-serving State Legislator in Mississippi
6 history has announced his retirement, however, the legacy of
7 Biloxi Senator Thomas Arlin (Tommy) Gollott's work will last long
8 after he leaves the Capitol. With 52 years of service, Senator
9 Gollott has built a lot of things from the ground up.

10 Mississippians owe Senator Gollott a debt of gratitude for his
11 service and his lasting legacy to the history of our state; and

12 WHEREAS, on September 24, 2017, Tommy Gollott (83) tied the
13 late Walter Sillers, Jr., as the longest-serving State Legislator.
14 Speaker Sillers served for almost 50 years, from when he was first
15 elected in 1916 until his death on September 24, 1966. Gollott
16 has surpassed Sillers' longevity mark. As the body's
17 longest-serving member, Gollott is affectionately called the
18 "Dean" and "Godfather" of the Mississippi Legislature; and



19 WHEREAS, throughout his career, the "Dean" of the Mississippi
20 Legislature has chaired numerous committees, both in the House of
21 Representatives and the Senate, and served as President Pro
22 Tempore of the Mississippi Senate from 1996-2000; and

23 WHEREAS, Senator Gollott gives thanks for his accomplishments
24 to the many "wonderful" people he has worked with over the years
25 to get things accomplished. In 1967, Gollott was elected to the
26 House of Representatives and was sworn into office in January
27 1968. He served in the House until his election to the Senate in
28 1979, taking office in January 1980; and

29 WHEREAS, Gollott's record is not likely to be broken anytime
30 soon since no other lawmaker has more than 38 years of continuing
31 service. In 2008, Gollott's fellow Senators passed a resolution
32 honoring him for his then-40 years of service. The resolution
33 said Gollott authored and was instrumental in passing legislation
34 that built the Mississippi Gulf Coast Coliseum and Convention
35 Center and the South Mississippi Retardation Center in Long Beach.
36 When he was a member of the House of Representatives, Gollott
37 authored the bill that enabled the purchase and preservation of
38 35,000 acres of the Pascagoula River System, the largest
39 free-flowing river system in the lower 48 states. He is also
40 credited with legislation authorizing dockside gaming that gave
41 rise to a tourism and economic boon on the Mississippi Gulf Coast
42 and in other areas of the state; and



43 WHEREAS, Senator Gollott attended the University of Southern
44 Mississippi and Jefferson Davis Junior College. His professional
45 experience includes working as the owner of Gollott and Sons
46 Transfer and Storage, Inc.; and

47 WHEREAS, Gollott, once an Amateur Athletic Union Boxing
48 Champ, organized the Happy Days Youth Boxing Club. He is known
49 for fighting for the Gulf Coast and the state when it comes to
50 promoting job creation. Senator Gollott was a Democrat for much
51 of his career, even serving as Senate President Pro Tempore under
52 then-Lieutenant Governor Ronnie Musgrove, until he switched
53 parties in 2000. Still, he said he does not believe in partisan
54 politics. "It shouldn't be partisan, we need cooperation"; and

55 WHEREAS, "I've always considered Senator Gollott not just a
56 friend but an ally in someone who always believed in what the
57 mission of this facility was," said Coast Coliseum Executive
58 Director Matt McDonnell. Gollott was involved from the very
59 beginning when the Legislature created the Coliseum Commission in
60 1968. In 1994, Senator Gollott built another legacy by turning a
61 small bureau into what is now known as the Department of Marine
62 Resources. In building the Department of Marine Resources,
63 Gollott helped the department begin to build the Gulf Coast; and

64 WHEREAS, one project in particular that friends said really
65 defines his character is with the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Gulf
66 Coast. As with most everything else, Gollott has been involved
67 since its inception in 1966. "First of all, it's his character,"



68 said long-time friend and club board member Jimmy Johnson. "He
69 loves children. He loves his community and, most of all, he loves
70 his family. The Boys and Girls Club is a big family. There's a
71 lot of children out there that we reach"; and

72 WHEREAS, in response to Senator Gollott becoming the
73 longest-serving Legislator in September 2017, PEER Executive
74 Director Max Arinder stated, "The Mississippi Legislature is
75 fortunate to have a person of Senator Gollott's caliber as a
76 member. Senator Gollott has devoted his adult life to public
77 service, always helping citizens on his beloved Gulf Coast. We on
78 the PEER Committee staff enjoy working with and supporting Senator
79 Gollott as he continues to serve the people of Mississippi"; and

80 WHEREAS, Tommy's family seafood business, Gollott's Seafood,
81 is synonymous with the business of the Mississippi Gulf Coast.
82 Gollott's daughter, Lisa Gollott Lane of Baton Rouge, the middle
83 of three daughters of Tommy and Zelma Gollott, said of her father:
84 "He has a heart for the Coast and for helping people. He can be a
85 bulldog at the Legislature, but he has compassion"; and

86 WHEREAS, Tommy Gollott will leave a lasting legacy not only
87 in his beloved Mississippi Gulf Coast but throughout the State of
88 Mississippi. His passion for helping build community throughout
89 this region has been unlike any other. He will truly be missed:

90 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
91 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
92 we do hereby recognize the lasting legacy of Senator Tommy Gollott



93 on the occasion of his retirement, and extend to Senator Gollott
94 and his family continued success and happiness in his retirement.

95 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
96 Senator Tommy Gollott, transmitted to the Lieutenant Governor, the
97 President Pro Tempore of the Mississippi Senate and the Governor
98 of the State of Mississippi, and made available to the Capitol
99 Press Corps.

