

By: Senator(s) Simmons (13th), Jackson (11th), Jordan, Hill, Caughman, McMahan, Blackwell, Chassaniol, England, Thompson, Kirby, Butler (36th), Butler (38th), Moran, Hopson, Norwood, Polk, Turner-Ford, Hickman, Thomas, Bryan, DeBar, Younger, Fillingane, Williams, Barrett, Branning, Chism, Simmons (12th), Blackmon, Michel, DeLano, Johnson, Sparks, Frazier

To: Rules

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 47

1 A RESOLUTION EXTENDING THE BEST WISHES OF THE MISSISSIPPI
2 SENATE TO FORMER STATE SENATOR NEVIN SLEDGE OF CLEVELAND,
3 MISSISSIPPI, ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION AND
4 COMMENDING HIS RECORD OF PUBLIC SERVICE, MILITARY DUTY AND HARD
5 WORK.

6 WHEREAS, we join the citizens of the Mississippi Delta in
7 honoring the service of an outstanding public servant on the
8 occasion of his 100th Birthday; and

9 WHEREAS, according to the latest Census Bureau statistics,
10 there are about 90,000 centenarians in the United States. One
11 centenarian, currently living in Cleveland, Mississippi, is former
12 State Senator P. Nevin Sledge. His long life can certainly be
13 measured by more than just years. His 100 years were filled with
14 public service, duty, hard work and other such worthwhile
15 tangibles and intangibles, that transcend the mere passage of
16 time; and

17 WHEREAS, born in Alva, Mississippi, Pascal Nevin Sledge was
18 one of seven children. When young Nevin was two, the family moved
19 to Bolivar County and that is where he has remained ever since,



20 outside of his time in military service. Senator Sledge went on
21 to attend Delta State University before leaving in 1942 to join
22 the Marine Corps as a cadet during World War II after the bombing
23 of Pearl Harbor, finishing first in his training class of 319
24 Naval Aviation cadets, which included future President George H.W.
25 Bush. With his commission and wings, he became a Flight
26 Instructor at Corpus Christi, Texas, where one of his trainees was
27 future film star Tyrone Power. Afterwards, he entered the Pacific
28 Conflict where he served as a Command Pilot in the Marine Air
29 Transport Squadron, eventually earning the rank of Captain and
30 being awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross; and

31 WHEREAS, often engaged in conflict with the Japanese kamikaze
32 pilots and avoiding numerous near-fatal misses, such as when a
33 guided bomb passed just under his cockpit while stationary on an
34 airfield, leaving Sledge with a massive concussion. His heroic
35 exploits in the Pacific Theater were enough to bring a film crew
36 from the World War II Museum in New Orleans to Cleveland several
37 years ago to record a videotaped interview with Sledge; and

38 WHEREAS, after the end of World War II, Sledge returned to
39 his bride in Cleveland and began a long and successful career in
40 the automotive business, first as a parts department worker before
41 eventually owning Sledge Chevrolet-Oldsmobile Dealership. During
42 his tenure in the industry, Sledge received recognition through
43 countless accolades and awards: President of the Delta Dealers
44 Association, the Mississippi Dealers Association, the Regional



45 Dealers Council and National Dealers Council, and the 1981
46 recipient of the coveted "Quality Dealer Award" as recognized by
47 *Time* magazine; and

48 WHEREAS, Sledge has also had a successful political career,
49 serving 23 years as a member of Cleveland's Board of Aldermen from
50 1954 to 1977, eight years as the Vice Mayor of the city and,
51 finally, as a Mississippi State Senator representing Bolivar
52 County and a portion of Coahoma County for three terms before
53 retiring in 1992. He established a reputation as an expert on ad
54 valorem taxes and served as chairman on several committees.
55 Eighty-seven percent of the bills introduced in his last three
56 years as Senator, with Sledge as author, passed. For example,
57 Senator Sledge authored the "Country of Origin Catfish Labeling
58 Law," at a time when catfish farms were very prolific in the
59 Delta; and

60 WHEREAS, it was also while a State Senator that Sledge met a
61 young politician who impressed him greatly. "In the early 1980s,
62 I got to know a fellow named Bill Clinton," recalls Sledge, "and I
63 really thought he was sharp. He even visited my home here in
64 Cleveland several times while he was Governor of Arkansas"; and

65 WHEREAS, Sledge retired in 1993, buying a parcel of land in
66 north Cleveland which he called the Apple Farm. He is the father
67 of four children and is "Big Daddy" to nine grandchildren and many
68 great-grandchildren; and



69 WHEREAS, When asked what his proudest accomplishment has been
70 in life, Sledge said, "I've accomplished most of the things I set
71 out or wanted to do but, as quaint as it may sound, I always
72 wanted to make friends in my life. If you make and keep friends,
73 whether in the military, the Senate or wherever, it pays off in
74 dividends. In my opinion, nothing is better than having good
75 friends"; and

76 WHEREAS, Sledge was born when Warren G. Harding was President
77 of the United States of America and Lee M. Russell was Governor of
78 the State of Mississippi. Sledge's life has spanned the
79 administration of 18 United States Presidents from Woodrow Wilson
80 to Joe Biden; and 25 Mississippi Governors from Theodore G. Bilbo
81 to Tate Reeves. This family icon has witnessed many historic
82 events during his lifetime, including the Great Depression, World
83 War II, and man's walk on the moon; and

84 WHEREAS, a long life, lived well, full of heroic deeds and
85 high accomplishments. That is the life of Nevin Sledge and it is
86 one that we all should aspire to, whatever our age. He is truly a
87 great "Son of the Delta" and a great "Son of Mississippi":

88 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
89 MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby extend the best wishes of the
90 Mississippi Senate to former State Senator Nevin Sledge of
91 Cleveland, Mississippi, on the occasion of his 100th Birthday
92 Celebration and commend his record of public service, military



93 duty and hard work, and wish him continued success and enjoyment
94 of his retirement in the Mississippi Delta.

95 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
96 Senator Nevin Sledge and his family, and be made available to the
97 Capitol Press Corps.

