

By: Representatives Haney, Bennett, Estrada, To: Rules
Hulum

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 51

1 A RESOLUTION MOURNING THE LOSS AND HONORING THE LIFE AND
2 LEGACY OF MR. GEORGE A. SCHLOEGEL.

3 WHEREAS, it is written in Ecclesiastes 3:1 that "To
4 everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under
5 the Heaven," and as such, the immaculate author and finisher of
6 our soul's destiny summoned the mortal presence of dearly beloved,
7 Mr. George A. Schloegel, to eternal rest, rendering great sorrow
8 and loss to his family, friends and community; and

9 WHEREAS, Mr. George A. Schloegel, who rose from
10 high-school-age mailroom associate to Hancock Bank Chairman and
11 Chief Executive Officer, then Mayor of Gulfport, passed away
12 unexpectedly and peacefully on Friday, October 6, 2023, at the age
13 of 83; and

14 WHEREAS, Mr. Schloegel actively managed almost every facet of
15 bank operations and amassed an extensive resume of personal and
16 professional achievements spanning more than 60 years, and he was
17 a driving force in Hancock Bank's growth; and



18 WHEREAS, following Hurricane Camille in 1969 and again after
19 Hurricane Katrina in 2005, he instigated the "Together We Build"
20 and "Together We Rebuild" campaigns, respectively, for Gulf Coast
21 recovery, and after retiring from Hancock Bank in 2008, he served
22 as mayor of Gulfport, Mississippi, from 2009 to 2013 and was
23 instrumental in the city's and the Gulf Coast's continued economic
24 redevelopment after Hurricane Katrina, using his extensive
25 financial and management expertise to help his hometown recover
26 from the storm's devastation; and

27 WHEREAS, additionally, he was influential in assisting the
28 successful merger of Hancock Bank and Whitney Bank in 2011 and
29 served on the bank's advisory board until 2017, and even after his
30 final retirement in 2017, he carried in his pocket the original
31 mailroom key given to him by Leo Seal, Jr., in 1956 because he
32 said the key reminded him of humble beginnings and to treat each
33 person he encountered as if they would one day be the leader of an
34 important civic or business organization; and

35 WHEREAS, Mr. Schloegel, the former president of the
36 Mississippi Bankers Association, maintained a grueling
37 cross-country travel pace to tout the Hancock Bank story,
38 eventually the Hancock Whitney story, and the Gulf South's
39 economic potential to some of the nation's top financial firms,
40 and he remained a mentor for thousands of banking students as a
41 distinguished faculty leader at both the Mississippi School of



42 Banking and the Graduate School of Banking at Louisiana State
43 University for nearly 40 years; and

44 WHEREAS, an inspirational leader by style, Mr. Schloegel
45 challenged future leaders to combine aspirational goals with
46 uncompromising fundamentals, and throughout his career and
47 retirement, he inspired the highest standards of commitment and
48 integrity among colleagues, community leaders, and government
49 officials who recognized him as one of the Gulf South's most
50 passionate and involved advocates for strategic economic growth,
51 educational opportunity, and strong quality of life for all
52 citizens; and

53 WHEREAS, born on June 17, 1940, to Joseph A. and Nancy
54 Bertucci Schloegel, young George was actively involved as a
55 youngster in the family business, and as one of seven siblings, he
56 helped his family operate a truck and poultry farm as a young man,
57 often pulling a wagon to sell vegetables and eggs door to door;
58 and

59 WHEREAS, after his father's sudden death, 16-year-old George
60 added a second job at the then Hancock Bank in October 1956,
61 earning \$1.00 an hour as a mail runner and messenger, and in that
62 same month in 1956, he and his wife of 64 years, the former Peggy
63 Harry of Gulfport, had their first date at the Friendship Oak on
64 the University of Southern Mississippi-Gulf Park campus; and

65 WHEREAS, Mr. Schloegel was a graduate of Louisiana State
66 University in New Orleans (now University of New Orleans) as well



67 as senior management tracts at Harvard Business School, Columbia
68 University and Northwestern University, and always dedicated to
69 hard work, he worked in the Whitney National Bank while at school
70 in New Orleans and at Hancock Bank while home for weekends; and

71 WHEREAS, upon graduation, Mr. Schloegel returned to full-time
72 employment at Hancock but remained close to the Whitney
73 organization, and he was instrumental through the decades at
74 multiple regional endeavors involving both banks and both states,
75 the most notable of which may have been meeting President George
76 W. Bush in New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina to
77 deliver the blueprint of opening a joint emergency branch location
78 for all New Orleans area banks; and

79 WHEREAS, Mr. Schloegel served as chair of the Mississippi
80 Gulf Coast Chamber of Commerce and Leadership Mississippi, and in
81 his 10 years of service on the Gulfport School Board, he witnessed
82 the consolidation of Gulfport East and Gulfport high schools,
83 vastly improving the school system's efficiency, instruction, and
84 financial stability, and during that decade, he also insisted on
85 and succeeded in preventing raises for taxpayers in the school tax
86 millage; and

87 WHEREAS, additionally, Mr. Schloegel helped to secure four
88 years of worldwide television coverage and international attention
89 for the Mississippi Gulf Coast as four-time chair of the Miss USA
90 Pageant hosted in Biloxi, and he also served on the White House
91 Task Force on Hunger and as a two-term president of the Harrison



92 County Association for Retarded Citizens, a Salvation Army board
93 member, Gulfport Little Theater board member, Gulfport Yacht Club
94 Commodore, and St. James Catholic Church Parish Council president;
95 and

96 WHEREAS, Mr. Schloegel was a past president of Mississippi
97 Jaycees and national vice president of U.S. Jaycees, and as a
98 co-founder of Leadership Mississippi, Leadership Gulf Coast, and
99 Coast 21, a regional coalition of business leaders committed to
100 well-planned economic development, he was selected as one of South
101 Mississippi's inaugural Top Ten Community Leaders in 2002 and to
102 the Mississippi Business Hall of Fame in 2004, and Mississippi
103 Governor Haley Barbour appointed Schloegel as chair of Barbour's
104 transition team; and

105 WHEREAS, he earned accolades as Gulfport Young Man of the
106 Year (1965); Mississippi's Man of the Year (1966); U.S. Jaycees
107 Outstanding State President (1969); Pine Burr Scouting Award
108 (1974); Mississippi Gulf Coast Carnival Association King (1988);
109 NAACP Humanitarian Award (1994); Mississippi Gulf Coast Community
110 College Hall of Fame (1984); Hotel-Motel Citizen of Year (1995);
111 Pat Santucci Spirit of the Coast Award (1996); United States Navy
112 Superior Public Service Medal (1996); Coast Citizen of the Year
113 (1997); Gulfport Rotary Club William Harris Hardy Founders Award
114 (1999); Laurel Wreath Citizen of the Year Award (1999); NASA
115 Distinguished Service Award (2001); and the Boys & Girls Club
116 Citizen of Year (2002); and



117 WHEREAS, a dedicated family man, Mr. Schloegel was an ardent
118 historian with exceptional knowledge of South Mississippi's
119 evolution from a campsite on the Old Spanish Trail to a thriving
120 tourism and business destination, and as a cofounder of the
121 Friends of the Gulf Islands National Seashore, he helped lead the
122 construction of an exact replica of the Ship Island Lighthouse, a
123 familiar Gulf Coast landmark that burned in 1972, and the
124 inspiration for Hancock Bank's corporate hallmark, according to
125 original 1886 blueprints; and

126 WHEREAS, an ardent supporter of regional economics, Mr.
127 Schloegel celebrated his birthday by walking between the Bay of
128 St. Louis and the Bay of Biloxi bridges, many times with young
129 emerging coastal leaders in tow, and his love of family and
130 history were intertwined and led him to purchase the original
131 Harry family home as an anniversary gift for Peggy so she could
132 raise their children in the house where she was raised, and he was
133 proud to track the lineage of the old antebellum home back to the
134 descendants of our Nation's first president, George Washington;
135 and

136 WHEREAS, Mr. Schloegel was a horse enthusiast with a passion
137 for raising Paso Finos and Peruvian Pasos, and he was an avid
138 gardener who for many years grew the bedding plants that
139 eventually graced the grounds of Hancock's Gulf South locations;
140 and



141 WHEREAS, in the last days of his long life, Mr. Schloegel was
142 hard at work in the archives vault of Hancock Bank, participating
143 in the development of the 125th Hancock anniversary publications
144 for 2024, and to the end of his life, he remained committed to his
145 faith, his family, the bank, and the coastal community, as he had
146 many pursuits, and took on each with tremendous energy and
147 passion; and

148 WHEREAS, Mr. Schloegel is survived by his wife, Peggy Harry
149 Schloegel; his children, Matt Schloegel (Linda), Melissa Schloegel
150 Marion (Andrew), Mark Schloegel and Michael Schloegel (Ashley); 10
151 grandchildren, Andrew Marion (Kelly), Brooks Marion, Christian
152 Schloegel (Sarah), Matthew Schloegel, Mary Rebecca Schloegel,
153 Anthony Schloegel, Grace Schloegel, Jack Schloegel, Sophie
154 Schloegel and Lily Schloegel; two great-grandchildren, Paul George
155 Marion and Martha Kay Marion; and a host of other relatives and
156 friends; and

157 WHEREAS, a genuine man of exceptional character, Mr.
158 Schloegel's outstanding legacy will continue for generations to
159 come, and precious memories of time spent with him will hopefully
160 continue to provide warmth, peace and comfort to his loved ones;
161 and

162 WHEREAS, it is the policy of the House of Representatives to
163 recognize and honor the lives of great Mississippians, especially
164 those such as Mr. George A. Schloegel, a man whose life's light



165 illuminated the path of hope for all he encountered along this
166 earthly sojourn:

167 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
168 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby
169 mourn the loss and honor the life and legacy of Mr. George A.
170 Schloegel, and express deepest sympathy to his family and friends
171 upon his passing.

172 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be
173 furnished to the family of Mr. George A. Schloegel, and to the
174 members of the Capitol Press Corps.

