

AN EXPRESSION OF COMMENDATION

WHEREAS, it is most fitting to recognize Gene Wesley Tiley for his inspiring longevity and to commend him on the occasion of his one hundredth birthday; and

WHEREAS, Gene Wesley Tiley was born on June 14, 1926, in Monroe, Louisiana, to Dana Boyd Tiley and Roscoe Abel Tiley, Sr.; at the age of nine, he moved with his family to Antonia in Grant Parish, Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Tiley graduated from Pollock High School in 1943 and began working in shipyards in Orange, Texas; he enlisted in the United States Navy and entered active service as an apprentice seaman on May 19, 1944; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Tiley attended boot camp at Camp Wallace, Texas, and completed a sixteen-week signal school in Sampson, New York, where he earned the rank of signalman third class; he received further naval training at the Amphibious Training Base in Camp Bradford, Virginia, and was assigned as a signalman on the USS LST-975, a landing ship tank vessel; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Tiley spent his entire active service career aboard the USS LST-975; he served from the time the ship was commissioned until it was decommissioned and was honorably discharged on May 14, 1946, with the rank of signalman second class; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Tiley earned numerous campaign ribbons for his service in the U.S. Navy, including the World War II Victory Ribbon, American Theater Ribbon, Asiatic Pacific Campaign Ribbon, and the Philippine Liberation Ribbon; Gene Wesley Tiley is the oldest surviving World War II veteran residing in Grant Parish; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Tiley returned home to Pollock, Louisiana, after completing his military service; in July 1946, he partnered with his brother-in-law and father to purchase Johnson's Café, which led to the formation of Tiley-Montgomery General Mercantile; the partnership lasted seventeen years; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Tiley married the love of his life, Hilda Waggoner, in the summer of 1947; in 1951 they were baptized at First Baptist Church in Pollock; he and his wife raised four children: Patricia, George, John, and Janet; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Tiley purchased Foster's Store and established Tiley's Supermarket on Highway 165 in Pollock in 1963; he and his wife worked tirelessly to meet the needs of the Pollock community, and the supermarket became the hub of the community, providing groceries, a meat market, hardware, feed, seeds, pharmaceuticals, and banking operations; the store also served as a center for payment of light and gas utilities, provided extended charge accounts for patrons, and offered free delivery of groceries; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Tiley was ordained as a deacon at First Baptist Church on August 13, 1967, and he served the church in various capacities, including as a trustee and general secretary of the Sunday school; he also served many years as quartermaster at the Pollock Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) post, and continues to support the VFW and Disabled American Veterans; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Tiley and his wife retired in 1984 and enjoyed many years of traveling throughout the United States and attending church events and activities with their grandchildren and great-grandchildren; their marriage spanned sixty-one years until Hilda's passing in 2008; and

WHEREAS, Gene Wesley Tiley continues to spend his days at home, reading, watching television, making jokes, looking at Facebook, and recounting his adventures over the past one hundred years; he is an inspiration to the Grant Parish community and is most deserving of recognition for reaching this milestone in life.

THEREFORE, I, Michael "Gabe" Firment, do hereby commend Gene Wesley Tiley on the occasion of his one hundredth birthday and do hereby extend sincere wishes that he remain healthy, happy, and prosperous as he joins the exclusive club of Louisiana centenarians.

**Michael "Gabe" Firment
State Representative, District No. 22**

June 5, 2026