

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 15

Senator Shirkey offered the following concurrent resolution:

1 A concurrent resolution of tribute offered as a memorial for
2 Tom Casperson, former member of the House of Representatives and
3 the Senate.

4 Whereas, It is with great sadness that the members of the
5 Michigan Legislature learned of the passing of Tom Casperson. A
6 steadfast public servant, he worked tirelessly during his
7 legislative tenure for the residents of the Upper Peninsula and all
8 Michiganders; and

9 Whereas, A life-long resident of Escanaba, Tom Casperson
10 worked in his family's log truck business for 27 years, 12 as
11 owner/operator. He was proud of the fact that he was the third
12 generation to participate in the family business. Hours of working
13 in the woods and driving log trucks through the Upper Peninsula
14 forged his respect and sense of responsibility for the natural

1 resources of our state and instilled a passion for their sustained
2 and strategic use. He was active in his profession as a member of
3 the Michigan Association of Timbermen and the Timber Producers
4 Association. A log truck accident and his subsequent efforts to
5 pursue safety measures and design changes in the industry inspired
6 him to run for elected office; and

7 Whereas, Tom Casperson served for 14 years in the Legislature,
8 relying on his experience in business and forestry, his faith and
9 passion for the interests of the Upper Peninsula, and his
10 willingness to work with all interested parties to address the
11 problems facing our state. First elected in 2002 to the House of
12 Representatives, he served 6 years representing the One hundred-
13 eighth District. In the House, he held the position of Assistant
14 Majority Whip. During this time, he served as chair of the
15 Conservation, Forestry and Outdoor Recreation Committee and the
16 subcommittee on Forestry and Mineral Rights. He was vice chair of
17 the Transportation Committee and minority vice chair of the
18 Tourism, Outdoor Recreation and Natural Resources Committee. He
19 also served on the Agriculture, Energy and Technology, and Veterans
20 Affairs and Homeland Security committees, and the Appropriations
21 Subcommittee on Transportation; and

22 Whereas, In 2010, Tom Casperson was elected, and reelected in
23 2014, to the Michigan Senate, representing the Thirty-eighth
24 District for 8 years. In the Senate, he served as chair of the
25 Natural Resources and Transportation committees. He also served on
26 the Outdoor Recreation and Tourism; Reforms, Restructuring and
27 Reinventing; Families, Seniors, and Human Services; and Finance
28 committees; and

29 Whereas, Tom Casperson's ability to listen and courteously

1 discuss contested issues provided him with an avenue to champion
2 matters important to his constituents. He worked hard to find
3 common ground and consensus on contentious issues, such as mining
4 and land management, that allowed economic development in northern
5 Michigan while also protecting the natural resources that make the
6 Upper Peninsula a special place. He took the lead on incorporating
7 the castle doctrine in state law, protected the autonomy of the
8 Mackinac Bridge, and required the state to implement a Land
9 Management Plan. He secured funding for a wide variety of key Upper
10 Peninsula projects, including repairing infrastructure in Houghton
11 County following the "thousand year flood," aiding numerous
12 communities impacted by the historic Freeze Crisis in 2014, and
13 rebuilding a breakwall in Grand Marais Harbor that had been in
14 disrepair for decades. His perseverance and ability to work across
15 the aisle resulted in his sponsoring 118 bills that became public
16 acts during his 14-year tenure as a legislator. Moreover, he was
17 recognized by many organizations as being an effective legislator,
18 with several awarding him Legislator of the Year including *MIRS*
19 *News* in 2013; and

20 Whereas, Tom Casperson loved helping people. He was willing to
21 listen and forge relationships and give the time to mentor the next
22 generation of leaders, and he was humble and passionate in these
23 efforts. His devotion to the people of Michigan and his passion to
24 provide a voice for the Upper Peninsula will not soon be forgotten.
25 The Senator's sincere faith in God, concern for people, and
26 legislative efforts and achievements will impact the state for many
27 years; now, therefore, be it

28 Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives
29 concurring), That we offer this expression of our highest tribute

1 to honor the memory of Tom Casperson, a member of the Michigan
2 House of Representatives from 2003 to 2008 and the Michigan Senate
3 from 2011 to 2018; and be it further

4 Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the
5 Casperson family as evidence of our lasting esteem for his memory.