

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 49

Senators Brinks and Nesbitt offered the following resolution:

1 A resolution of tribute offered as a memorial for George Alvin
2 McManus Jr., former member of the Senate.

3 Whereas, It was with great sorrow that the members of this
4 legislative body learned of the passing of George Alvin McManus Jr.
5 In his twelve years in the Senate, he represented his lifelong home
6 of the Traverse City area and constituents throughout northwestern
7 Michigan and the eastern Upper Peninsula. The humor and common
8 sense that he brought to his community and to the Legislature will
9 not soon be forgotten; and

10 Whereas, George McManus was a fourth-generation cherry farmer
11 who grew up on the family farm on Old Mission Peninsula. He married
12 his wife, Clara Kratochvil, in 1949, and they settled in East Bay
13 Township, where they would raise their family. After earning his
14 bachelor's and master's degrees from Michigan State College, George

1 had a lengthy career with the Michigan State University Extension
2 Service, retiring as County Extension Director after 26 years of
3 service. In addition to sharing his agricultural expertise on the
4 WTCM radio program, "The Farm and Orchard Show," he and his family
5 hosted numerous foreign agricultural exchange students on their
6 farm. George and Clara raised nine children together, ensuring that
7 all of them attended college; and

8 Whereas, George McManus began his career in public service in
9 the 1970s. Elected to the Northwestern Michigan College Board of
10 Trustees from 1970 to 1990, he also served on the Michigan
11 Commission of Agriculture from 1985 to 1988, having been appointed
12 to the position by Governor Blanchard. In addition to these public
13 service positions, George served as a trustee for the Michigan
14 National Bank Traverse City branch and on the Farmers Mutual
15 Insurance Board, while also being a pillar of the community. The
16 McManus family were faithful parishioners at St. Francis Church in
17 Traverse City, and George was actively involved in the Farm Bureau,
18 the Elks Club, and the Honorary Order of Hibernians. He also served
19 as President of the Rotary Club, taking the stage at the club's
20 annual minstrel show; and

21 Whereas, In 1990, at the urging of his wife, Clara, George
22 McManus ran for and won a seat in the Senate. Representing the
23 Thirty-seventh District in his first term and the Thirty-sixth
24 District in his second and third terms, George's expertise was
25 immediately recognized, earning him appointments to several
26 committees related to agriculture. In his very first term, he was
27 appointed vice chair of the Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, and
28 Wildlife and chair of the Appropriations Subcommittees on
29 Agriculture and Transportation. He also chaired the Appropriations

1 Subcommittee on Natural Resources in later terms, served on the
2 Appropriations Subcommittee on Higher Education, and rose to chair
3 the Committee on Farming, Agribusiness and Food Systems in his
4 final term; and

5 Whereas, As a legislator, George McManus shepherded numerous
6 bills to improve the lives of his constituents and farmers across
7 the state. He was most proud of his work in sponsoring the
8 Groundwater and Freshwater Protection Act, which encouraged
9 responsibility in the use of agricultural pesticides and
10 fertilizers and provided funds to close abandoned wells, and in
11 securing funding for Project GREEN, an initiative housed at
12 Michigan State University that works to enhance plant agriculture
13 through research and outreach. He also sponsored legislation to
14 facilitate the transfer of the former Traverse City Regional
15 Psychiatric Hospital from the state to the Grand Traverse Commons
16 Redevelopment Corporation, facilitating the transformation of this
17 historic facility into retail stores, offices, and housing.
18 Remembering his roots, George worked tirelessly to negotiate
19 legislation that protected family farms from the property tax "pop-
20 up" under Proposal A, and he supported legislation to reduce the
21 tax credit threshold for farmers to participate in the Farmland and
22 Open Space Preservation program, ensuring that the program's
23 incentives were not inadvertently eliminated when property taxes
24 were cut by Proposal A; and

25 Whereas, George McManus is survived by nine children, 22
26 grandchildren, 48 great-grandchildren, and one great-great-
27 grandchild. He will be remembered by his relatives, by his extended
28 family of foreign exchange students, and by his community for his
29 wit and wisdom, his dramatic storytelling, and his love of the

1 land, which he shared with all around him; now, therefore, be it

2 Resolved by the Senate, That we offer this expression of our
3 highest tribute to honor the memory of George Alvin McManus Jr., a
4 member of this legislative body from 1991 to 2002; and be it
5 further

6 Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the
7 McManus family as evidence of our lasting esteem for his memory.