



**THIRD DAY**  
(Monday, January 14, 2013)

**ADDENDUM**  
(Senate Resolution 9)

**EIGHTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE**

**REGULAR SESSION**



# SENATE JOURNAL

EIGHTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE — REGULAR SESSION

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PROCEEDINGS

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## ADDENDUM

(THIRD DAY — Monday, January 14, 2013)

The following remarks regarding **SR 9** were ordered reduced to writing and printed in the *Senate Journal*.

**Senator Eltife:** Thank you, Mr. President and Members. It is an honor for me to present this resolution today, as we honor the Dean of the Texas Senate, John Whitmire. I know many Members will want to speak, so I'll be very brief. It's appropriate that we take time to honor someone who has given 40 years of his life to public service. As State Senator representing District 15, John Whitmire has fought tirelessly for his constituents. How many times last session did we hear Dean Whitmire say, Let's put a face on it? By putting a face on it, he wanted to place us squarely in his constituents' shoes. He wanted us to understand the impact. The decisions we were about to make might have an impact on our constituents. Put a face on it. Know as a Senator how you're affecting the daily lives of everyday Texans. He didn't stop there. He would fight to the bitter end on every issue he was passionate about to make sure his constituents were represented. This has been his mode of operation session after session. It's no wonder his constituents have reelected him to office for over 40 years. As the Dean of the Texas Senate, we have seen firsthand how much he cares about this great institution, leading us in a fair, steady manner. Our Dean, who is willing to take the time to listen to all sides and lead our caucus of the whole in a fair, nonpartisan manner. Yet, someone who can be decisive and can bring us together when needed. Then there is John Whitmire, our friend. John Whitmire is one of those individuals we all consider our friend. My definition of a true friend is someone who will take the time to listen and, no matter what the circumstances, will be there in good times and bad. One thing about serving in public office is you find out quickly who your real friends are. Usually, when you're down on your luck and things aren't going very well, everyone runs for cover. Friends are nowhere to be found. But that is simply not true with John Whitmire. I will never forget, on the floor of this Senate, at a time when Senator Gallegos may have been vulnerable to a challenger, John Whitmire stood here and said, if you take on Mario Gallegos, you take on me. Members, there is no more a loyal friendship than that. We should all be so lucky as to have a friend like John Whitmire. I'm honored today to present this resolution, and I'm grateful to call John Whitmire my friend. Thank you, Mr. President.

**Senator Nelson:** Thank you, Mr. President and Members. I was going to talk about the power corner, actually. Thank you, Mr. President. I rise in support of this resolution and to congratulate Senator Whitmire on your 40 years of service to your constituents, to our state, and as Dean, to Members of this Texas Senate. When John Whitmire was sworn in as a State Representative, Nixon was President, gasoline was 43 cents a gallon, and I was a sixth-grade teacher who never ever imagined serving in this body. When I joined the Senate, Senator Whitmire had already served exactly the number of years that I have served in the Texas Senate, and I'm the longest-serving Republican in this body. Now, he's the longest-serving Democrat, as you know. The Dean, sometimes, Mr. President, does call this his power corner, but, Dean, I thought that I should explain to everybody the real reason that I'm seated back here. When we chose where we were going to sit, it was believed that my background as a mother and as a teacher might help keep Senator Whitmire in line. It didn't work, although sometimes when he grabs the mic and he's very passionate, I still find myself reminding him to use appropriate language. Instead, it was Senator Whitmire who became a teacher to me. And this seating assignment would lead to a friendship so treasured that the entire Nelson clan considers Senator Whitmire a part of our family. Some of you had an opportunity to meet my dad when he was alive. He was a World War II veteran, and he loved to come down here and watch the Legislature. In one of my early years, I was really stressing over how to vote on an issue, and my dad said, You need to go ask Whitmire, he's got a good head on his shoulders. Now, coming from Dad that was the highest compliment that one could give. And, most of you know that my house was broken into over the holidays. My grandson found out about it, and first thing he said to me, Senator, was, Did you call Senator Whitmire, because my grandson knows that nobody in this state knows more about criminal justice than Senator Whitmire. I get to listen to the conversations when Senator Whitmire comes on the floor with the pages back here. And he always makes it a point to ask them their name. He asks them where they went to school. He helps them appreciate the magnificence of this building and takes the time to really interact with them and make them feel welcomed. I've seen how wonderful he is with his smart, beautiful daughters, Whitney and Sarah. There is no prouder papa than Senator Whitmire. Now, sitting back here in the Dean's power corner, I have learned a lot about John Whitmire. I have certainly come to appreciate his sharp sense of humor, which is, it provides much-needed laugh therapy sometimes when things get real tough on those tough days. I've also had a close-up seat to some of the best and most passionate speeches I've ever heard on the floor of this Senate. He is a champion for those who don't have a lot of champions in their lives, for troubled youth and victims of crime and even members of the chain gang, Senator Whitmire. Now, from time to time, Senator Whitmire and I disagree. And when that happens, I often hear him utter my most favorite Whitmireisms, and he'll lean over and he'll say, Senator, if you and I agree on everything, that means one of us is not representing our district. That's what makes John Whitmire the perfect Dean. He's a Democrat; I'm a Republican. He recognizes that we both love Texas and, like everyone on this floor, are here to make a difference. When Senator Whitmire speaks as the Dean, he speaks for this entire body. He loves this institution, and that's not just the Senators but all the staff who support us. And he knows, he respects our Senate's traditions. He knows that when we come

together and put our collective resolve into something, there is nothing we can't accomplish on behalf of the people of this state. Senator Whitmire, thank you for your service in this body. Thank you for your friendship, and thank you for your leadership as Dean of our Texas Senate.

**Senator Hinojosa:** Thank you, Mr. President and Members. I, too, rise to support this resolution recognizing the Dean of the Texas Senate. And I've known Dean Whitmire since the early '80s when I was in the House, and we both had hair at that time, Senator. And let me tell you, as Chairman of the Committee of Criminal Jurisprudence when I was on the House side, I relied and depended a lot on Senator Whitmire on many pieces of legislation to improve the criminal justice system. But I always admired Dean Whitmire because he was fearless, never afraid to speak his mind and take on, if necessary, those in charge. I will also tell you, Dean, that used to be Dean Carlos Truan, whom I replaced, they made you the Dean of the Senate. And I appreciate your leadership. Many times when we have issues among ourselves, it's really amazing to see Dean Whitmire work his magic in the Senate caucus in a bipartisan way to protect us, to protect this institution that we all love so much, and for that, I want to tell you, I'm very happy for you. I'm very honored to call you my friend, and they told me since I'm your personal lawyer, attorney-client privilege, I shouldn't say any more. Dean, congratulations.

**Senator Patrick:** Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you, Members. I'm looking at this photo in here, Senator, that top one. It looks like a young Chevy Chase or Johnny Carson, one of the two. I would never know it's the same person. I was thinking, 1972, you began, I graduated from college in 1972, and that's been a long time, 40 years ago. Quite a record, third longest-serving legislator in the history of this great state. I did an unofficial count, 45 Senators have come and gone since you first came to the Senate. Forty-five Senators, and they say life begins at 40, if that's true for a Senator, then you still have another 20 or 30 to go, and then you'll break the all-time record. I wanted to share a couple of quick things with you. Members, those of you who were here in 2007, my first session, remember that John and I had some pretty feisty debates on the floor, in the spirit of good debate, never disrespectful, but feisty debates. And sometimes afterwards, I'd call him or he'd call me and we'd just say, Hey, it wasn't personal, protecting your point of view, protecting my point of view, bringing an issue forward. And slowly but surely, John and I began a friendship. Because as Senator Eltife said, he's our friend, and not just our Dean and a fellow legislator. But to really have a friend, what's required is trust. You don't become a friend of someone until you trust them. And so, it takes time to develop that. And over time, we develop a trust. And in 2010, John, the summer of 2010, Grover Norwood, who's here with us, he came up to honor you with his wife. I got a call from a friend of mine, Grover Norwood, and many of you are familiar with Grover, you've seen the movie, *The Heart of Texas*, and Grover had discovered this incredible seminary program, the prison in Angola. And seminary, that over 16 years had changed the character of the men behind those walls, where it went from the most dangerous federal, I mean, state prison in the United States, to the least dangerous. Crime had dropped dramatically and the common denominator was the seminary program, in the mind of the warden. So, Grover wanted me to do something about it. And I said, I'm just a Senator, what we need is the Chair of Criminal Justice. And I'm on that

committee, but he's the Chairman. So, I called John that day on the way home, and I said, Senator, there's this program, and I started telling him about the plan, and before I could finish the plan, I'll never forget your words, because I asked him if he would go there with me, over to Angola, and he said, Anything that will help the men and women behind bars and to help protect our employees behind bars, anything that will make our prisons better, I'm all in. And I didn't know John. I mean, it's a big commitment to go with me over to Louisiana, and we went over, Members, and spent two nights in prison. I won't tell the whole story, John, when he was short a toothbrush. We were sharing a cabin together, but we spent two, can you imagine John and I in the same cabin, in prison—headline: Whitmire and Patrick go to prison together—and without saying, we were both really impacted by what we saw. And, we were there for the graduation of those lifers who were becoming pastors. And they asked John to speak, and he wasn't prepared. He didn't know they were going to ask him to speak, and, John, you got up on that stage and spoke to about 400 inmates and their families. It's the best speech I've ever heard you give because it was from the heart. And I can remember pretty much what you said word for word, you thought you had seen it all. And you said, I'm going to take this back to Texas. And there were no public tax dollars involved. We raised the money and within less than a year, which is lightning speed in the Legislature and in government, we opened through his leadership and his guidance and his commitment, we opened the first seminary in the history of Texas in a prison, and it's the second in the United States. We've already had the first class of 40. We have another class of 40. And I sent John a newspaper article the other day, already this is having an impact on that prison, that crime against inmates is already down in that prison, in the first year. And I think, John, of all the things that you have done to represent the people in your district, as Senator Eltife said, and the people in this state, that your legacy will be that you were tough on crime. And your friends from the law enforcement are up in the gallery to honor you today, as well as many friends around the floor, if you haven't noticed. But it's the men and women behind bars, and there's no question we have some really bad people behind bars that shouldn't get out and you know that, as well as all of us, but we also know that they're human beings behind bars who have made a mistake and at some point in life are going to get a second chance. And if we don't do something to change the character and the hearts of those men and women, when they get out they'll return to a life of crime. And so, you are just as committed to keeping the bad actors behind bars as you are to making sure that those behind bars who have paid the price get a second opportunity in life to be productive citizens. And that will change lives. I'll close with this. We did a banquet about five months ago to raise money for our seminary, and two people came up to me afterward, and they said, Senator, I want to thank you because my son is in that prison and my son is in that seminary program and for the first time in my life as a mother, I feel like my son has a chance at life. And that's the kind of thing that John Whitmire works on this floor. As Jefferson said, a difference of opinion is not necessarily a difference of principle. We all want the best for our state. We can disagree from time to time on politics, but we all want the best for our state. And, it's an honor to serve with you, John, it's an honor to be your friend, it's an honor to have that trust that builds long-term friendships. So, it's a great honor to serve with you. Thank you.

**Senator Uresti:** Mr. President, Members, good afternoon. I proudly rise today in honor of my colleague and my friend, John Whitmire. And as has been said, for 40 years he has represented his Houston constituents in the Legislature and in doing so has rendered great service for all the people of Texas. Now, it's no secret that when I first came over to the Senate, the Dean took me under his wing. The jury's still out as to whether or not that was a good thing or not, but the Dean is smart, he's articulate, he's hardworking, he's—John, I can't read your writing—is good looking. But seriously, as the longest-serving Member of this body, Dean Whitmire has emerged as the conscience and the soul of the Senate. He exhorts us to follow our hearts as he does, to pursue the best interest of those we serve as he does, and to be honest and forthright in all our endeavors as he is. And as Senator Eltife mentioned, what I appreciate the most about Dean Whitmire is how he reminds us to put a face on it. You know, it was 40 years ago this month that John first took his seat in the Texas House. I was 10 years old, and my good friend Senator Hegar was three years old and still in diapers, I think. Well, 40 years ago, Elvis Presley performed a concert in Hawaii that was watched by more people than the Apollo moon landings, and, apparently, Elvis influenced the Dean's love of dancing, hence his name, Boogie. In addition to that, the Miami Dolphins beat the Washington Redskins in Super Bowl VII, becoming the first and only team to complete an undefeated season. Perhaps that inspired the Dean to the pursuit of legislative perfection. But there was another event in January of 1973, that I believe had the greatest influence on his political plans. Ferdinand Marcos became president for life of the Philippines, and as I understand it, he wants to be Dean for life of the Texas Senate. Now, keep in mind, back then there was no Facebook, there were no cellphones, and I don't think there was air conditioning when the Dean first took over. But, Dean, I want to congratulate you on a milestone, and, Whitney, I want to tell you that the thing that I admire the most about your dad is that in the most serious, the most difficult, and the most delicate matters that this Senate has dealt with, at least over the six years that I've been here, I've seen your father cut through all of that and bring a balance to that issue and make it seem like everything is going to be okay. Dean, congratulations. Thank you for being my mentor, and thank you for being my friend.

**Senator Huffman:** Thank you, Mr. President and Members. Dean, it's with great honor that I get to stand up here today and talk to you. And I don't have any notes so I'm going to talk from the heart here. When I was thinking about what I would say, I was thinking about what all the different Members might have been doing in 1973. And I had the same jokes, you know, Schwertner and Glenn were actually in diapers the first time you came. And I was the age that my son is now. I was in high school. So I think about, as I look around at all the Members, and I think about all the experiences and all the life that we all lived while you were here in the Capitol doing work for your constituents. So, we've all been to college, we've raised kids, and y'all have grandkids and gone to medical school and saved lives, Dr. Campbell, you know, we've done all kinds of things. But you were here taking care of the people's business. That puts you in such a unique position, and to me, it makes you part of the fabric of Texas. And you are really part of Texas lore now, and I'm convinced that you will be the longest-serving legislator someday. So, you'll always be in Texas history. And I would be willing to bet that someday, if you live long enough to come back to this

Capitol, that there's a picture of you in this Chamber, because I think that you have made such an impact on all of us that you will need to be forever remembered in this Chamber, and I mean that. You have a way of connecting with people, and everyone in here, I bet, feels like you are their friend. And that's a very special gift to have. We all feel like you are so special to us. Now, Dr. Campbell, you will probably know him least than anyone in here, because everyone else new was House Members. But I promise you, I'd be willing to bet you that when this session is over, that you're going to look over at that Dean and you're going to look at him with great fondness. And you would've had your differences. I'm pretty much looking at the two of you, sure that there's going to be some disagreements in this coming session, but I guarantee you, when you leave this session, you will have respect for him and you will love him. And that's a special gift, Dean. I am so honored and privileged to serve with you as your Vice-chair in Criminal Justice. I publicly thank you for letting me serve because I suspect I probably wouldn't be there if you didn't want me there. And I think it says a lot about you that you were willing to let me serve as your Vice-chair with my background and being a woman. But you took me in and I learned a lot from you. And hopefully, I've helped you see a few things my way, I think so. And I think we make a great team. So, I honor you today. You're my friend, and you're just such a wonderful Dean, and we couldn't do any better. Thank you so much.

**Senator Ellis:** Thank you, Mr. President and Members. I think that I have the distinction of having served with you the longest, being from the Harris County area. To the new Members of the Senate, Dean Whitmire gave me some advice when I came here almost 23 years ago. He said, Freshmen ought to be seen and not heard. I have watched him over the years. I don't think John Whitmire was ever not heard. It is interesting to note how he came here. In 1972 I was coming out of high school. John was only a few years older because he was 22 years old when he came. But prior to that year, we elected people under the old at-large system. So, if you were running for a State Senate seat, it was somewhere in the neighborhood of the size of a congressional district at that time. And prior to them running in 1972, if you ran for a State Rep seat, it was pretty close to what a congressional seat would be as well. Because of the Voting Rights Act, John Whitmire and a whole crew of people who never would have had an opportunity to serve in this building on either side had a chance to come. Because that legislation really created the system that broke away from that old at-large system of electing people. And although in a lot of ways it was intended to help the minorities in particular to be in power, John, you have never forgotten that it was that process that brought you here. I can remember your first time running for the State Senate. It was a tough race. I can't remember his name, but you had a very wealthy businessperson who self-funded that campaign. But you put shoe leather into that campaign. When I look at the pictures in the brochure, I notice Craig Washington there, and you all looked pretty good back then. I must say, you look better now than you did back when the picture was taken, but you and Craig were very close allies. And that was really how I started a relationship with you when I came here. The bio talks about all of the stuff you've done in the criminal justice area, and you have done a lot. Dan pointed out that you've been very tough on crime, but you've also been smart on crime. Everybody knows that we incarcerate a higher percentage of people than most of the states in the country here in Texas. You've done



a lot to make us much smarter of what we do in our criminal justice system. Couple of things had really struck me watching you over the years. I had a bill some years ago that essentially would've made it a bit more difficult to lock people up as opposed to giving them a second chance with certain conditions than giving them treatment. There was a young woman that testified before that committee. You singled her out. You saw something in her testimony. You saw something in her heart, and you offered that young woman a job, and she still works for you today. In the last session of the Legislature, we had a guy out of Dallas, Cornelius Dupree, who spent a record of maybe 27, 29 years in prison for a crime he didn't commit. I had him here testifying on a bill to increase the compensation for people who were wrongfully convicted and clear up some issues, a bill that Senator Duncan was the lead sponsor on. You found out this young man was still having to report to his probation officer, waiting for the paperwork to be completed so he would truly be exonerated. And while we were making points on the bill, you picked up the telephone quietly, called the probation department, I'm sure, said a few things of a certain vernacular that they could understand how sensitive the issue was to you, and by the end of that hearing, they testified, and that young man was off his papers. You made a difference in this body. Somebody said they wouldn't be surprised if there's a picture up of you in this building 50 years from now. I wouldn't be surprised if you're still here 50 years from now. You've been a friend to all of us, and I'm glad that over the years you didn't opt to go somewhere else. Obviously, there were opportunities where you could've run for Congress. From looking at the war chest that I go through every once in a while, there are a lot of opportunities that you could've had and still have to run for the office. Well, you choose to be here in the Texas Senate because you love this body and you love the work that you do. And for that, my friend, we're all very appreciative that you opted to stay here all 40 years and wish you God's grace to serve for many more. Thank you.

**Senator Deuell:** President, Members, I want to iterate what my colleagues have talked about and that is the friendship that you've shown all of us. I came in 10 years ago and nobody knew me very well. I think you had even said you expected horns, but you extended a friendship and a respect to me and to my office, and I deeply appreciate that. I remember the first caucus meeting that we had and you used the term, protect the body. I really didn't know what that meant at the time, being new to the process, and I've come to deep appreciation for the fact that you want the Texas Senate to function in a dignified and honorable way so that we can do the people's business, and that's irrespective of the philosophical differences that we might have. You know that it's important that this body function in a way that honors the people of Texas that put us here, and that's something that perhaps is not appreciated by all Members, or certainly the people that work here, and perhaps not knowing very much of other people throughout the state. There's talk about term limits, and some people advocate them. Personally, you would be one that maybe comes to mind, but I can't imagine what this state would be like without your guidance in criminal justice issues. I think you had testimony here today about that and the effect, and I think the people make that decision about how long somebody serves. I think the people in your district that continue to make a wise decision, and none of us really know how much longer we'll be here, but I look forward to serving with you in the years to come, in

working with the issues that are important to you and your district, to me and my district, and all the people of Texas. Thank you for your service. Thank you for your friendship. Let's go get 'em. Thank you, Mr. President.

**Senator Seliger:** Members, ladies and gentlemen, with a nickname like the Dean's, I know people are thinking that sometime this afternoon comes the 10 minutes of humor. But that's not what this afternoon is about. In fact, this afternoon is not about what the publication says because it's not about 40 years of tenure. It's about 40 years of service. Forty years of conscience, 40 years of serving the people of the district and the State of Texas. In one of the publications that recognize Dean Whitmire as one of the best, there are qualities I think you'll agree that don't just describe the best performance during a Legislature, but a best performance in the tradition of the Texas Senate. It was said about Dean Whitmire that he is the reliable anchor that kept the Senate from drifting off into partisan storms. As he has often pointed out, there is a time for partisanship, but it is never, never justification not to work together and to respect one another. In another quote it said that the Dean at some point cautioned the Members about legislation that would harm solidarity in the body later. Our disagreements today must not keep us from working together and for the people of the State of Texas in the future. And finally, he argued one day against practices that would harm decorum, because at the end of the day, we must justify the respect that people of Texas should have for their legislative bodies. In 2004, when I first came into the Senate, my first committee assignment was to be the Vice-chairman of the Criminal Justice Committee, and I argued with the President then, I said, you don't remember, I think, that I'm the new guy, that I am thirty-first in seniority out of 31 and the Chairman of our committee will be our senior Member, surely that's too much of a labor for him. I will be the junior Republican in the party, and he is the senior Democrat, is that really what's best? I was so persuasive in fact, I spent the next six years as a Vice-chairman of the Criminal Justice Committee, and from the very first day I sat to the left of John Whitmire, my legislative priorities were important to him, my contribution was important to him. It was the very example of mentorship, leadership, and friendship. It means a lot and it's a tremendous example. Senator Huffman talked about the portraits that's around this room, and if you will look at them and think for a moment, none of them served in the Legislature as long as John Whitmire. While it's subjective judgment, I suspect that we would say, nobody cared more in this room and nobody was more committed to serving the people of the State of Texas than John Whitmire. It is my fondest hope that someday my grandchildren will be in this room with their children and there will be a portrait of John Whitmire. Unlike all of these poses here, there must be in that portrait the wry smile that describes John Whitmire. And I hope what my grandchildren tell their children is our grandfather served with John Whitmire, and he was a friend of John Whitmire, and that's a good thing in this body and in the State of Texas. About the same time that John Whitmire was elected to the Legislature, Aristotle said this: Dignity does not consist in possessing honors but in deserving them. I hope that I, and we, deserve the honor to serve here during the tenure of John Whitmire. Thank you for your service and your friendship.

**Senator Fraser:** John, I'm honored to rise on this great occasion, but somebody's made a terrible mistake here. Every year, you and I celebrate our birthday together. It's well-known that you were born three days after me. They're trying to recognize you for 40 years of service, and you and I are only 40 years old. How could that possibly be? I am extremely honored to be able to talk about one of my extremely good friends in the Senate, and maybe my best friend in the Senate. We got a lot of history. I'm sitting here listening to the conversations everyone are making. When I started this adventure back in 1988, even though that was 25 years ago, John had already been here 15 years then. Pretty amazing. I think about my time in the Senate. I get to thinking, I've been here awhile, but then I think about how long John's been here, that's almost twice as long as that, and the things he's done, he's achieved. John and I have had the good fortune of being friends for a long time. We didn't start out that way. We were, actually battled pretty good the first few days we were in the first couple of years in the Senate. But as we started to spending time together, not only here, back having lunch, late nights discussing things, traveling together, golf games, we actually realized that it was amazing the common things that have happened in our lives growing up and the common background, the things that we had in common. And I've been very honored to be able to call him my friend. Back in 2001, John was getting a lot of seniority, and he had moved over in the corner of the building, and he allowed me to move in next to him as a suitemate. But you had to get his blessing, and I got the blessing, and he allowed me to move in on the first floor in the top corner of the building. Everything went well for a while, but after I had been there for a matter of months, he realized that I had a habit that really bothered him a lot, that I liked to have fajitas delivered to my office for lunch at least once a week. After it happened several times, John came up to me and he said, Fraser, the office stinks. It's terrible. Every time I walk in there, all I smell is onions in the office. So, we went back and forth, and it wasn't but a few days later, I came to my desk and opened up the drawer of my desk, and there was a bag of onions in my desk. Little did he know, by the time he got back to his office there was a five-pound bag of onions in his desk. And we started a war going back and forth called the Fraser-Whitmire Onion War. And that war continues today. I moved out of that corner of the Capitol. I didn't move, my staff moved. They moved me to the other corner. And it's really bothered me because I'm not sure how Whitmire is going to be able to live with not being able to smell onions over in that corner of the Capitol. And unfortunately, we're transferring that to Senator Zaffirini, and she's already warned me not to do that, but we'll discuss that one further. But, John, I wanted to make sure that you didn't forget me and the onion wars, and if you will open up your desk, the middle desk, there's a little present there to make sure you remember me. That's been there for a while, so that you will make sure you don't miss me from being your suitemate. John, I appreciated your comments, and I think the freshmen probably right now are not realizing how much they're going to appreciate the Dean by the end of the session. John Whitmire is, you know, we all have to vote our district, there are some partisan votes, but there's amazingly few partisan votes, and you're going to find out the tradition of the Senate and the fact that he's making sure he's covering you and taking care of you as a Senator. I think a lot of these freshmen, you don't realize yet how much you're going to appreciate the way that John runs the Senate and how he takes care of you as a

Senator. And I can almost bet by the end of the session, you'll walk over to him and you'll say, thank you for what you do for me. He's done a fabulous job, done a great job for his constituents. He's done a wonderful job for criminal justice. John, I'm honored to be your friend, and I'm assuming both of us are going to be around for a while longer and we will fight not only the battles on the floor but also on the golf course, and I'm honored to be your friend. Thank you.

**Senator Hegar:** The first thing I would have to mention is, I, too, stand to support this resolution that Senator Eltife, as you walk away, you made a mistake. I would agree the Dean listens to all sides, but I have a strong case of ADD, all y'all can vouch to that. My attention span is only so long. His is not long at all. So, you need to put in there, he listens to all sides, but only for a short while because his attention span is not long enough to get the whole conversation. You got to get in about five words or less. And, if you can say it in that, he's listening to you. But with all seriousness, Senator Whitmire is someone who does listen to all sides as long as you can say it in just a few words or less. And, I'm glad to know, Senator Fraser, I've always wondered why his desk stinks so bad. I do not like onions and now I know. We'll know to get the Sergeants to clean your desk. Senator Whitmire, as I was sitting here earlier listening to our colleagues talk about different things about yourself and their appreciation for your friendship, for your love for this body, for your desire to do what is in the importance of your constituents and the people of the State of Texas, I was thinking about how today, in part, the difference between the two bodies. And, Members, many of you've served in the House, some of us haven't, the fact is, is we do things different in the House and the Senate. As I talked to new Members coming in, when they say, Can you tell me about the differences between the two Chambers? And I always like to say, Let me tell you about the similarities. Well, what are those? We both get six hundred dollars a month and that's about it. They're different in everything else. But as I stand here thinking, the House debated for how long today on your rules? Yet, we took a whole couple of minutes on the Senate floor, and our rules are just as important as theirs. But in part of that why, that comes from leadership and that comes from the body learning to work together to understand that we're here to do the people's business, and in part, I think that's because of your leadership as Dean. And I say thank you for that. John, if nothing else, I didn't come here planning to talk, but I figured I had to stand up because I know it's just got to be eating you, listening to all of us talking and you have no rebuttal whatsoever. So, if nothing else, I hope every Member stands up and talks because that's driving him just a little nuts, having to sit there in that chair. But I would say, Dean, I did notice this picture that Senator Patrick pointed out. And, you do look good at that top picture. And to tell you how much things have changed, it's amazing. Is that actually an ashtray that's right there on the front mic? That's amazing what things have changed over the course of the years that you've been here. But I would say nothing else, thank you for time and dedication in support of the Members in this body, the integrity and making sure that we do the people's business, and I would also share all of our colleagues' comments, that you are somebody that I would consider an absolute friend. And I know, number one, I appreciate when all of our colleagues, when my wife or three little kids are around here, everybody treats them with grace and respect. And you've been the utmost of that. My wife and I drove up here today for, as she

drove with me, and we were in part, talking about that, how, as she passed you the other day and took a second, double look and said, Oh, you don't have the three ducklings with you, so I didn't recognize you at first. But you always do when you take that time, because it's about family. And I appreciate that. So, thank you for your service, thank you for your friendship. And wow, 40 more years, that would be amazing. I can't do it for 40 years. It's amazing that you could stay here that long. Congratulations, Dean.

**Senator Watson:** Thank you, Mr. President. Dean, I'm going to keep this short and sweet. I can't say it better than so many of our colleagues have already said it. I will point out, when I listen to Senator Nelson talk about the power corner, Senator Campbell, my first session, I sat where you sit, and one of the things I learned about the power corner is that it never quiets. It's always talking. It's almost like going to a baseball game and listening to the chatter when they're trying to strike out the batter and they just keep talking. It's just a constant commentary about, well, sometimes it even has something to do with what we're doing on the Senate floor, but rarely. And apparently, Senator Whitmire first joined the Senate, I don't know the exact facts, but he apparently first joined the Senate before we had electricity because he has no need for the microphone. In my first session, I'll never forget sitting there, and anytime that he wanted my attention, he would just bark out, Watson, and expect me to turn around and show back up. And, I thought, I need to move. And you will notice, I moved about as far away as I could move. And yet, last session, I was sitting at my desk reading, minding my own business, and I hear, Kirk, Kirk. And I think, is he really yelling at me all the way from his chair? And I look, and sure enough, he was standing on his tiptoes, looking over at me, wanting my attention. It's constant. The chatter is constant. Dean, I just want to say this. Among all the things that's been said, I want to reiterate, you are one of the most instinctive political figures I've ever had the pleasure of being around. You're smart, you care deeply, and I think that instinct comes from that deep care about people. When you stop and think about 40 years, and you try to put, as you say, a face on it, and you try to think about the number of faces, the number of people that you've touched or that you've helped or you've made their lives a little better, there's not a person in public service today that shouldn't aspire to that sort of record. You, as it's been indicated by your colleagues, you help make this place special. You help make service here more meaningful. And I want to stand and share the thought with those who have said, that it's an honor to serve with you, because indeed, it's a great honor. Thank you, Dean, for all you do.

**Senator Van de Putte:** My apologies for not rising to speak on this resolution, but I greatly appreciate the opportunity to add my voice. Dean, you have heard the comments of so many colleagues and how much they cherish you and they respect you. What I'd like to comment today is something that has not been touched upon. And that is, your ability to cherish and choose your friends. I've known you for 22 years. At the time that I was first in the House, and you may not remember that over the probably hundreds and hundreds of bills that you have authored and sponsored, but as a little bitty, itty House freshman in 1991, I had a very important bill, at least, we all think our bills are important, and it had to do with the ability of us to prevent childhood poisonings and the poison control bill. When that bill came over, it wasn't necessarily in your committee, but you had an interest, and you may not remember it

at the time because of the thousands and thousands of constituents that have called your office over the course of your service, but there was a young mother who had lost her 18-month-old because she didn't understand and didn't know who to call about when her child ingested something. And you were such a champion on that, not just because of what the statistics showed or because we had a method of finance, but because it touched a child in your district and one of your constituents. The number of measures that you have done in this body because someone called your office. You pick up the phone, you try to find a remedy, and if it is systemic you bring it to the Capitol. That takes an uncanny ability. Your ability not only to choose your friends, as you see here, but, Dean, all of us in the Capitol respect the way that you have the wonderful ability to choose great staff. Over the years, your office has been the center of some of the brightest and best and hardworking staff people. At your district office, and certainly, in this pink dome, and that is that the 22 years I have known you, that your staff has been known to know the issues, they develop it, and I know, pardon me, that it is how you like to surround yourself with people who are sometimes smarter than you are. But you treasure that. On a personal note, the only time I've ever seen you in agony, isn't exactly when this Chamber was going to be in a meltdown, or when a piece of legislation that you really cared for wasn't going through, or your inability to stop a piece of legislation or policy that you thought hurt this state. The time I saw you in complete agony was at the bedside of your dearest friend, Mario Gallegos. I saw a man who knew that the end was near, and as you comforted Mario's family and those of us there, I know that it was difficult for you because you were losing your best friend. Thank you for giving our friend Mario the opportunity to correct his life and to bring him to sobriety and to bring him to be able to have that first transplant for another five and a half years so that he could serve in the State of Texas. It takes a great friend to help another friend confront their demons, and I watched you do so with grace. I know that if Mario were here today, he'd be the loudest one in thanking you. And I want to thank you today on his behalf. Tomorrow we will be able to honor him, but I could not let this day go without realizing your greatest asset and that's to never give up on someone even when they've given up on themselves. I know that you love this body and partly, I think, you and I have shared that love of sports and the competition. You like the rules to be fair and you like a good game. Even if your team doesn't win, you like a good game, and you and I have watched football games, baseball games, and basketball games. I'll close with this, and that is that you and I were sitting at one of the many Rockets-Spurs battles, I think it was playoff series and, yes, we probably snuck away from the Capitol to either go to Houston or San Antonio to watch that. And as we were sitting together, I commented that the Spurs were given a call, but it was a makeup call and the Dean turned to me and he said, Leticia, you really know basketball, you know your sports. And I said, I love sports, but that makeup call was like you voting for my bill yesterday, after you told me you were not going to vote for it, but you did because you fought me on a matter earlier in the day. Thank you for recognizing that, that you can help people in this body with what they believe is important. Maybe that your love of sports and competition is just the perfect simile for this Senate Chamber except that we're not compensated very well. You love the challenge. You love a good fight but you like it to be fair. And you do your darndest to make sure that all of our fights or

disagreements are fair. Thank you for putting out the fires sometimes, and thank you for your diligence on preventing this body from going into meltdown. So maybe I should call you the Ice Man, like the great legendary Spurs player, because under pressure you keep cool and you're always on track. Thank you, and may God bless you and your family for many more years of health and success. Thank you, Dean.

**Senator Lucio:** Dean, you and I have been colleagues for 26 years now, four years in the House that I served, and 22 years here. Many incredible things have happened over those years, and looking back, you've been right in the middle of all of those great things that have happened to our great state. I do have to look back though, and I have to share a moment in time, a time where, 1993 when Senator West and Senator Shapiro and a few others came on board. We were at the Clements building, and they were redoing the State Capitol here, and Governor Bullock saw fit to make sure people sat where he wanted them to sit. And the unfortunate thing for me and the late Frank Madla, he sat us right in front of John Whitmire, I mean, smack in front. Now I know why Kirk Watson sits completely the furthest away from him. But for a whole session, we heard loud things, constant things. Frank and I took off our hearing aids thinking it would be a better way of life for us, and it got worse because he just raised the level of his voice. It was a tough session having to sit there in front of the Dean, and, quite frankly, Frank and I were really never in our chairs, we tried to stay away and talk to the Members away from our chairs because he talked so much. But, we got things done and, quite frankly, at that point, the Dean served as someone that we could turn to and ask support from. I got a little uptight a little while ago when I heard Senator Fraser talk a little bit about golf. I thought he was going to say that John was the biggest cheater we ever played golf with, but he didn't. Thank God he didn't, but I'll say it. I've questioned a few of the things he's done, but anyway, he's the only one that was able to beat Buster Brown without warming up when we went out in the old days when we had time for golf. We don't anymore. I think in looking back over the last 22 years in the Senate especially, I think most meaningful for me, Dean, has been the fellowship meetings that we've been able to sit down and come together, Democrats, Republicans, sitting down and sharing with one another and trying to find a way of making sure that this body functions the way it was intended to function: one for all and all for one on behalf of the people of this great state. I want to congratulate you, and I know there's so many other things that we could probably say. You're just a very lucky guy that all those Senators that have come before you are gone and they're not here to, they would've reflect back on their experiences with you as well. But the new ones will soon find out what you're all about, John, and I'm looking forward to a great session with each and every one of you. Thank you, Mr. President.

**Senator West:** Thank you very much, Mr. President. And, John, I'm not going to be long, but I can recall back in 1993, as Senator Lucio was talking, I'd heard of John Whitmire but had never met him. And the first time I saw you, you were walking down the halls of Clements with a toothpick in your mouth, I said, he's a good guy. And you haven't changed much either. When you start thinking about John Whitmire, I could go and pretty much say, some of the same things everyone else has said. Here's the summation of the argument in terms of John Whitmire. You are a good man. Now, just think about that. Everyone on this floor has said that John Whitmire is

a good man. What have they said? They've said that we, each of us have been able to come to you in different moments within our legislative careers and talk to you, confide in you, even though it may very well get out a couple of days later, but we confided in you anyway. Think about this. You remember years, several sessions ago when we got ready, Mr. President, to give seconding speeches to our Senate Pro Tempore and we decided and said, well, you know, let's cut down the speeches and let's give a few. On this day, most of the Members of this body are talking about their relationship with you as a good man. You think about the institutional knowledge that you continue to share with us. You think about your demeanor, yep, all of it. Now check this out, for the new Members, you watch and see when he gets ready to get up and debate, okay. You'll see what we're talking about. When we get ready to debate with you, we start off in a very civil tone, then all of a sudden John Whitmire does all that. But it shows the passion that you bring. You are a good father, says a lot. You're a good parent. And that's, the testament is that your daughter's sitting right there with you. That's incredible. You are a great statesman, as evident by your tenure in this body, and the respect that each and every one of us has for you. When we don't always agree, and that's fine, but the reality is that you want to make certain that this body is respected and that whatever political, partisan issues that we have, it's okay to have those things, but we've got to put the best interests of this body above all of that. You are a friend of Patsy Spaw, the Secretary of the Senate, Lieutenant Governor, and many of the staff persons that are around here. You've been serving in this body, when did the Vietnam War, was it 1973 when the Vietnam War was over with? You've been serving ever since that happened. Secretariat. You've been serving a long time. Boogie, boogie fever. Many of us even call you Boogie. Boogie night. It just goes to show you exactly how we feel about you. And here's the other piece that many of you that are just coming to the body, or on the outside, don't know. Even when we leave our work here at the Senate, you would think that most of us don't want to be associated with another outside after we leave work, but that's not the case with the Senate. You will find us down at the Austin Club watching basketball games together. You will find us in different spots together in this city. You will have John Whitmire, Craig, calling us at 10:00 or 10:30, and say, where are you? Come on down here and join us. And people will get out of their beds and come and join Senator John Whitmire. So, my friend, yes, I said friend, he's a good friend also, you're a great statesman. You're a good man. I consider you a friend. You're a good parent. What more could we ask of a Member of this body?

**Senator Nichols:** Thank you, Mr. President. I also rise in support of this resolution. The, in the spirit of some of us, something Senator Hegar said, I promised to keep my comments short, because I know you will appreciate that. Related to one of the things Senator Watson said, I agree with him, this is a pretty noisy corner back here. I cannot tell all of you in the audience how many most interesting stories I have heard over the last six years in this corner. Mr. President, I know you try to keep order, or you do keep order in the house, but I recognized, we all recognized you've kind of given up on this corner a long time ago, I think, as far as the noise level. But, and also something else Senator Eltife said a while ago, one of the things about putting your comments always put a face on things. I also remember one of the things I think about often on the floor when we get into some issue, when you stand up and say,



"Members, you really need to stop and think about this." I remember numerous times in my six years you've said, stood up and said that, and I can tell you from this desk that's like a big yellow flag rising high. And what you're thinking about is not only the impact of what happens here in this Chamber but the impact of the people of this state. I have really first met you almost 16 years ago in a different capacity. I served for eight years. I've worked some with you. For the past six years I've worked closer with you. Every time I've ever asked you, would you give me the time to talk about something, in every case you always did, for that I thank you. I will also say in the last two years, particularly, last 18 months working on Sunset, I've probably had more time to work closely with you on a lot of serious issues that we deal with at Sunset, and at every case I think it's very important for the people of this state to know that every decision you made that I heard, even in confidence, was always what is best for the State of Texas. For that I thank you. For being a friend, I thank you. And for your 40 years of service of the State of Texas, I also thank you.

**Senator Davis:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I proudly rise to speak to, on behalf of our friend Dean Whitmire. Dean, I want to tell you that you exemplify a lesson, my favorite lesson that I learned when I was in law school. I took a class called the Warren Court, and for those of us who became lawyers, via law school we know that most of our classes are our precedent-building lessons. You learn how the law shapes and develops over time, but you hardly ever ask about the people who were behind it, who shaped it. One particular class that I took was called the Warren Court and our professor had one message for us to consider throughout that semester in the class, and that was to think about the nine Anglo men who made a decision to desegregate our public school system in the United States. And he asked us to read biographies or autobiographies on every one of the Justices of the Supreme Court and to consider what it was about each of them, their unique experiences in their lives that made them able to consider and to represent the perspective of people whose shoes they've never walked in. When I think about you and your leadership on the Senate floor, I'm reminded of that lesson. Many might look at you and think you aren't capable of considering what it might be like to walk in other people's shoes. But somehow, when you started here at only 22 years of age, you brought with you the ability to do that. I hope one day you will write a book about your 40 years here, but I also hope that you'll talk about what it is in your life experiences that brought you to be able to talk on behalf of people whose experiences you've never shared. I've only been here for two sessions, and I've heard you give some of the most inspiring speeches on this floor, and always, your most inspirational speeches revolved around talking on behalf of people whose life experiences you personally do not know. Whether it was voter ID debate or sanctuary city but, very particularly, I want you to know how much I appreciate the way you've spoken on behalf of women. We all like to tease about your love of women, but I know that you truly do love women because of the representation that you've given not only to women in your district but women throughout the State of Texas. In the last few sessions, you've helped us to pass some very important pieces of legislation, and I want you to know how much I personally appreciate your assistance on the women's shackling bill, on the rape kit bill. And, most importantly of all, I want you to know how much I appreciated the speech that you gave on this floor on behalf of a woman's perspective from your office, when we

debated the sonogram bill. It was powerful. You have clearly demonstrated that you hear women's voices, Senator Fraser. And I want you to know how much I appreciate working with you and how much I've learned from watching you and hope to learn for many more years to come with you on the Senate floor. Thank you, Dean.

**Senator Rodríguez:** Thank you, Mr. President and Members. I rise in support of the resolution. I want to tell my freshmen colleagues here, see, I'm still talking like a freshman here. My first session about John Whitmire, when I first ran for this position, I had been elected in the primary, but I still had an opponent in November. And I happened to be in Austin in one of those many receptions that we all know about, and Senator Whitmire, afterwards, surprised me by inviting me to go out to dinner with him and some other folks, and of course, I was in awe of the fact that this is a Dean of a Senate. I hardly know the man and he's invited me to join him and some of his friends at one of our local watering holes here, good restaurant, watering hole. And I'll never forget that because it made me feel that I was a person that would be welcomed if I would be elected in November here in the Senate. So I want to thank you for that, I've never forgotten that. And I also want to thank you for relentlessly grilling me on the legal services bill, as I recall, that was one grilling that I still haven't gotten over, as a matter of fact. And especially since you had let me know, kind of like what, I think, Senator Van de Putte or somebody said, you had indicated you were against the measure, but you ended up, despite all that relentless grilling, voting for it. And so, I thank you for that. I learned something from you in that regard. And I also want to thank you for, as a freshman, I guess after listening to some folks here, allowing me to be heard and not to be seen, because just last week you were reminding me that freshmen, he was telling me this, colleagues, that freshmen should be heard and not seen, but he didn't say that to me, as I recall, during my freshman session. And consequently, I think I overdid it, if I'm not mistaken, my colleagues here would agree, in speaking out. And I have to tell you that as Senator Davis said, I have the utmost respect for your ability to convey sentiments and feelings and the message on public policy issues that we deal with here, especially to be able to do that when you've been out in one of your famous or infamous all-nighters. I'm going to call it an all-nighter because there was not one time that you and some of your colleagues invited me to one of those, and I remember being out late and the first place, the next morning, realizing that I can't keep doing this, just am not up to it. And in the second place, realizing when you were making that speech on the sonogram bill that despite your being out with us all that time, that you could get on the floor and deliver the kind of speech that Senator Davis was referring to. Just was amazing to me and I recall, distinctly, telling my wife of how tremendously impressed I was in your ability to speak so forcefully, knowing that you had been out all night, and probably not that much preparation for it. So, thank you for all of that, Dean. I want to thank you for your service to the State of Texas. As county attorney, I handled a lot of juvenile cases over 17 years, and you taking a very strong lead in those issues, and I believe a lot of young people in this state, and the public at large, the taxpayers, have a debt of gratitude to you because of, as somebody put it, your smart approach to crime and trying to actually change people's lives in the process. So, thank you for your service, Dean, and I appreciate your friendship.

**Senator Duncan:** Thank you, Mr. President. Members, I didn't intend to be last, just changed my mind a couple of times about when I was going to talk. But, well, John, you're the master of the metaphor, and I think this Senate knows it. You are probably one of the most effective persons in debating a bill and also controlling the floor, of what goes on on this floor. I served with you on Finance for, I guess, 10, 12 years now, and he's formidable on Finance, so formidable that I've had to change the names of some of my good programs just so that he won't recognize them. You don't want him to put a face on the boll weevil bill. So, we changed the boll weevil bill to integrated pest management. And I got so tired of hearing John gripe about the brush control program that we changed that to urban stream flow enhancement, and we never hear about it anymore. But, John, I think from what you've heard today, you've set the standard for the Dean of the Senate. And those that follow you will have very big shoes to fill, but I believe, as we've heard today, the standard has been set. So, thank you for doing that, and thank you for being our leader from the position you set over there.

**Senator Whitmire:** I say to, certainly, the new Members, knowing when to speak and when not to speak is real key to be an effective Member. And I'm going to violate that because I probably should say thank you and sit down, but I'm not going to because I thought I generally knew what goes on on this Senate floor, and I'm totally taken back. When's the last time I wore a sport jacket and sports pants? I must say something though. First of all, Senator Campbell, I could not have done what I've done the last 40 years without divine intervention. To knock on doors, as a 22-year-old college student, be elected with George McGovern on the ballot in 1972 took something spiritual. And I haven't forgotten that because I go about my work knowing that I'm placed here for a special purpose. And simply put, if you treat people like you want to be treated, it'll work. And also reminding, my mother said, You're known by the company you keep, and she'd be very proud of me today with the company that I'm keeping. I must thank my parents who gave me my values, gave me an opportunity, even though they divorced when I was seven. One took me to Hill County and I lived in a rural setting, so I had rural values, Senator Nichols. And then crying, against their wishes, we went back to Houston as a ninth-grader, so I got big city opportunities. So, I honestly have to thank my parents. And another thing I also remember as I go about my work, that I would hope that you would remember, is that you don't get anywhere without the help of others. Didn't have a lot of help in that first campaign, but I did have help, and I've had help every step of the way. My daughters, honestly, have been my strength, my staff, and I've been very blessed. But what I really stood up for today is to talk about this institution and the people that sit here with me, those before me but, most importantly, those that are going to share responsibilities this spring. Yes, I've had some accomplishments, and, John, I listened to you. While I was doing this, y'all were going to school. I had one Senator one time, Senator Shapleigh was kind of fussing at me about something. I said, Shapleigh, don't try to explain that to me, you were in the eighth grade when I was taking care of that community. But also, know that while I was here, you were busy preparing yourself and also fulfilling other obligations. And I stand here to let people know, as has been enumerated in my life, most of what we do people don't even read about, don't even know about, scores of accomplishments where you have made people's difference in

your communities. And, Senator Birdwell, I heard what they said about me, but let me just salute you. What you've done for our country and your suffering and your pain and your strength and to be a survivor, I could never compare with your accomplishment. And I would actually honor this gentleman, as I stand here before you, you're a miracle, and divine intervention is present with you there. I can look at my good friend, Juan Hinojosa, Vietnam survivor. Many folks, fifty-some-odd thousand, Senator Hinojosa, did not return. And I could go further and talk about you being deported with your migrant undocumented mother. I could never compare to your standards of survival. And I can go through this floor and talk about the success stories and the heroes, our Lieutenant Governor having served his country in our service. So, let me just say, thank you. I think I'm here for a reason. I hope the best is yet to come. I want to thank everyone, Lara Wendler and others that chose to do this, I would've voted against it. In fact, I'm going to take a new view of the resolutions that we bring to the floor. I have fussed on many occasions that we spend too much time on resolutions, but, you know, you have to be flexible in this business and be willing to compromise. In closing, thank you for allowing this special day. I'm committed to you, this body. And I will close by saying, the way you can really honor me on this day is to commit ourselves to the very, very best session that we can have and leave the politics and the partisanship at the hall. I understand we have to get elected. We have to be members of a party to get elected, but certainly, we all, and we got off to such a great start last week, to pass the rules 27 to nothing. I told the Lieutenant Governor after that meeting, I said, Governor, there's some really good chemistry in our caucus, people are really ready to deal with the people's business. We'll disagree, but we can do it without being disagreeable. Thank you for allowing this very special day for me and my family. Mr. President, thank you for allowing us to do this. Thank you, Members.







