

1 SJR80
2 212403-1
3 By Senators Whatley, Price and Scofield
4 RFD:
5 First Read: 01-APR-21

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7
8 HONORING GOVERNOR JOHN MALCOLM PATTERSON ON THE
9 OCCASION OF HIS CENTENNIAL YEAR.

10
11 WHEREAS, it is a great pleasure and privilege to
12 extend our highest commendations and honor to Governor John
13 Malcolm Patterson on the momentous occasion of his centennial
14 year; and

15 WHEREAS, born on September 27, 1921, in Goldville,
16 Alabama, to Albert Love Patterson and Agnes Louise Benson
17 Patterson, John Patterson graduated from Central High School
18 in Phenix City and began his celebrated career of public
19 service by joining the U.S. Army at only 17 years old, needing
20 his father's permission to do so; quickly rising through the
21 ranks to major, young John served honorably in World War II,
22 earning a Bronze Star for his meritorious service with an
23 artillery battalion in military campaigns across North Africa,
24 Sicily, Italy, Southern France, and Germany; and

25 WHEREAS, John Patterson married the late Mary Jo
26 McGowin in 1947, and they had two children, Albert Love
27 Patterson, III and Barbara Patterson Scholl; he attended The

1 University of Alabama, majoring in political science, and
2 received his law degree in 1949; he was recalled by the Army
3 for service in the Korean War and was transferred to the Judge
4 Advocate General section; after his military service, Mr.
5 Patterson returned to Phenix City in 1953 and practiced law
6 with his father until his father was assassinated as he left
7 his law office; John assumed the law and order mantle of his
8 fallen father and was elected the thirty-sixth Attorney
9 General of Alabama on a campaign platform to end the illegal
10 gambling operations and corruption that had been pervasive
11 throughout Phenix City and elsewhere in the state; and

12 WHEREAS, in 1958, he defeated George Wallace in the
13 race for Governor and was sworn into office on January 19,
14 1959, becoming the second youngest person to ever serve as
15 Governor; and as Governor, John Patterson amassed a remarkable
16 resume: He devised a rescue plan for the state's schools,
17 which were in disrepair and underfunded; he called a special
18 legislative session on education to raise teachers' salaries
19 and pass a \$100 million bond issue for schools; he worked
20 fiercely to pass a \$60 million bond issue for highway
21 construction and maintenance; he obtained desperately needed
22 additional revenue for education, state pensions, and mental
23 health by increasing the state sales tax on liquor and
24 cigarettes and closing several sales tax loopholes; and he
25 marshalled support for the passage of a much needed small-loan
26 law that effectively curtailed the activities of loan sharks;
27 and

1 WHEREAS, after serving with distinction and
2 dedication in Montgomery for eight years, Mr. Patterson
3 returned home to practice law and teach American government at
4 Troy State University; in 1975, he married the former
5 Florentina "Tina" Brachert Sawyer, to whom he has been wedded
6 for 45 joyous years; unable to refrain from serving his state,
7 in 1984, the distinguished gentleman accepted an appointment
8 to the Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals; during his respected
9 tenure on the court, Judge Patterson authored over 450
10 opinions; and, in 2004, as his last act of public service, he
11 was sworn in as the Special Chief Justice of the Alabama
12 Supreme Court to preside over an appeal; and

13 WHEREAS, Governor Patterson has long been known for
14 his impeccable dress, courtly manner, genteel speech, and
15 gracious and generous demeanor; he served the state admirably
16 as Attorney General and Governor, but many believe his true
17 calling was in a judicial robe; unquestionably an
18 extraordinary legal scholar, Judge Patterson lent wisdom,
19 fairness, common sense, and refined judicial temperament to
20 the courts of Alabama; and

21 WHEREAS, John Patterson remains razor sharp and
22 amazingly astute; he is a joy to share a beverage with and
23 feast on his wisdom, wit, and waggish yarns; his remarkable
24 life is a treasure trove of Alabama and American history; few
25 Alabamians have prominently participated in government from
26 such varied and influential vantage points, and his
27 contributions to our state and country remain meaningful,

1 continuing, and significant; and after a lifetime spent in the
2 service of our state and country, John Patterson now resides
3 as a full-time gentleman farmer with his wife, Tina, at the
4 place of his birth, Timbergut Farm, in Goldville, Alabama; now
5 therefore,

6 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH
7 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That Governor John Malcolm
8 Patterson is given our highest honor and commendation on the
9 occasion of his centennial year, and this resolution is
10 offered in deepest admiration and appreciation for his
11 immeasurable service, as well as with sincere best wishes for
12 continued blessings, happiness, and prosperity.