

State of Louisiana

Parish of Caddo In the Name and By the Authority of The Caddo Parish Commission

RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION & RECOGNITION *Mrs. Shirley Wills*

WHEREAS, the Caddo Parish Commission proudly commemorates Women's History Month by celebrating the exceptional achievements and groundbreaking contributions of women throughout history; and

WHEREAS, on October 4, 1978, **Mrs. Shirley Wills** earned a distinguished place in Caddo Parish history as she took her seat as the first African-American woman elected to serve on the Caddo Parish Police Jury, the body that would become the Caddo Commission, with her district including Stoner Hill, Anderson Island and parts of the Allendale and Highland communities; and

WHEREAS, Shirley Wills was born at Charity Hospital in Shreveport to Roy and Pauline Copeland Turner, in a loving family environment that instilled in her the values of faith, hard work, and community service and she fondly recalls as being filled with simple joys such as playing jacks, jumping rope, attending dances, and later, advocating for diversity by writing to a radio station urging the hiring of a black radio personality, a testament to her early commitment to equality and representation; and

WHEREAS, as a Police Juror Mrs. Wills led a successful fight for street and drainage improvements in her district and the renovation of the dilapidated, rat-infested Carver Terrace Housing Project. She also played a major role in the reapportionment of districts with the City of Shreveport; and

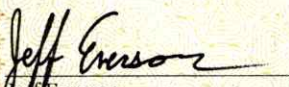
WHEREAS, Shirley Wills pursued her education with dedication, graduating from Booker T. Washington High School in 1963, and marrying Joe Wills at Oakland Baptist Church in July of the same year, eventually raising two children and four grandchildren and embarking on a successful career path, beginning at Captain Shreve cafeteria and attending business college before joining AT&T in 1969, where she remained for 32 years, finding fulfillment in her work and cherishing the supportive environment provided by her colleagues; and

WHEREAS, Shirley Wills served her community from her Police Jury seat until December, 1984, when the Police Jury gave way to the newly-created Caddo Parish Commission. However, leaving public office did not spell the end to her role as a political and civic activist. Along with her late husband, Joe, she led the movement to rename Stoner Hill Elementary School after its pioneering principal, Elijah B. Williams. They also effected the renaming of Hopewell Street to C.E. Galloway Boulevard in honor of the long-time pastor of Hopewell Baptist Church; and

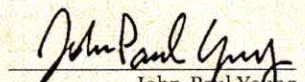
WHEREAS, Wills are active members of Hopewell Baptist Church where Shirley has taught Adult Women Sunday School Class and served on Senior Mission and Deaconess Boards, she has been a member of the PTSA at Claiborne and Queensborough Elementary Schools, and an active member of the Booker T. Washington Class of 1963.

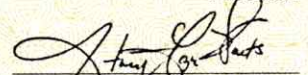
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Caddo Parish Commission hereby recognizes and honors Mrs. Shirley Wills for her exceptional leadership, professionalism, and contributions to her community during Women's History Month and beyond and holds her up to this Parish and as a shining inspiration to others, placing service above self, with the result that this world is a better place for all.

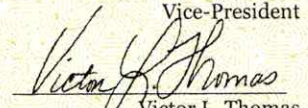
ATTEST:


Jeff Everson
Commission Clerk




John-Paul Young
President


Stormy Gage-Watts
Vice-President


Victor L. Thomas
District 3