

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 1023

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

ON THE DEATH OF
THE HONORABLE HAROLD C. GISS.

Arizona State Senator Harold C. Giss, who spent a quarter of a century serving the people of Arizona as a legislative leader, friend and adviser, was stricken and died on April 15, 1973, while attending the county fair in his beloved Yuma County. His sudden death at the age of sixty-seven saddened the hearts of the thousands of friends whose lives he had touched, aided, counseled and influenced.

A legislator whose door was always open to any person with a problem, whether governmental, legislative, political or personal, Senator Giss was recognized as the unsurpassed expert of the legislative process, a master student who read, studied and thoroughly analyzed every legislative measure introduced in either house of the Legislature each session.

Senator Giss was elected to the House of Representatives in 1948, elected to the Senate in 1950 where he served continuously until his death, served as Senate majority leader twelve years and had been the minority leader since 1966. Illness in recent years failed to curb his boundless energy, and his expertise and analytical ability in legislative matters and person-to-person relationships remained undiminished.

A strong exponent of dignity and decorum in the legislative chambers, he was acknowledged as a parliamentarian without peer, and a constitutional authority whose single, unswerving goal was to enact the best possible legislation for the people of the state, regardless of the political overtones of any proposed measure or the politics of its sponsor.

During his long career in the Legislature, Senator Giss served on twenty-four standing committees. He was chairman or vice chairman for many of the committees and served nearly twenty consecutive years on some. At the time of his death he was serving on the Education and Finance and Revenue committees and was a member of the Arizona Legislative Council, a position he had held continuously since the Council was formed on July 1, 1953.

He was an active participant in and for a time on the executive committee of the National Legislative Conference of the Council of State Governments and on the National Conference of State Legislative Leaders. He was a life member of the National Society of State Legislators and a member of the advisory council of that organization since its inception.

He was a member of the American Association of Higher Education Southwest Regional Council.

Throughout his career he was an active member of a great variety of select legislative committees.

A resident of Arizona nearly thirty-five years, Senator Giss was born February 5, 1906, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. His family moved to California when he was a youngster. He went to schools in Anaheim and Los Angeles, California, and after graduation from high school he attended Southwestern University of Law in Los Angeles for a short time. He married Goldie Pearl Stool in Los Angeles in 1937. The couple had three sons, Maurice, Kenneth and Gerald.

In 1938, Senator Giss moved to Yuma, Arizona, where he owned and operated the Emporium Department Store and the Toggery Men's Store and in recent years he had been an industrial consultant and engaged in real estate in Yuma. He was an aviation enthusiast and an avid sports and rodeo fan. He was active in numerous civic projects and was active in organizations including the Elks, Eagles, Kiwanis, Navy League and Woodmen of the World.

Practically every service organization in Yuma honored him by making him an honorary member or a life member. He held an honorary membership in the Yuma County Chamber of Commerce and a life membership in the Yuma Junior Chamber of Commerce. He was on the board of directors of several service organizations and was honored as "Man of the Year" several years ago.

As a member of the Arizona House of Representatives he served on standing committees including Aeronautics, Agriculture and Livestock and as vice chairman of Ways and Means.

His years of dedicated service to committees in the Senate include Education, 1955-1973; Finance and Revenue, 1963-1973; Judiciary, 1955-1972; Administration, 1957-1966; Agriculture and Irrigation, 1951-1966; Appropriations, 1951-1954; Banking and Insurance, 1955-1956; Constitutional Amendments and Referendums, 1965-1966; Counties and Municipalities, 1955-1966; Crippled Children's Hospital Investigating, 1965-1966; Employees and Supplies, 1953-1956; Enrolling and Engrossing, 1951-1952; Methods of Business, 1951-1952; Military and Veteran Affairs, 1953-1954; Planning and Development, 1953-1954; Public Defense, 1951-1952; Public Health, 1951-1954; Redistricting and reapportioning Study Committee, 1965-1966; Rules, 1953-1966; State Institutions, 1955-1966 and Tourist and Industry Development, 1955-1962.

In various legislative sessions he was chairman or vice chairman of Senate committees including Agriculture and Irrigation, Appropriations, Counties and Municipalities, Judiciary, Military and Veteran Affairs, Public Health and State Institutions.

He was vitally interested in preserving and providing water to the state. He was chairman of the Lower Colorado River Land Use Committee, whose recommendations will guide development of the river from Davis Dam to the International Border. He assisted in formation of Wellton-Mohawk Irrigation District, Yuma Mesa Irrigation District and Yuma Valley Water Users.

Dedicated to education, he was a key figure in establishing Arizona Western College.

He was an active member and participant on the Committee on Suggested State Legislation of the Council of State Governments which originated and drafted suggested state legislation, much of which has been adopted not only in Arizona but also in many other states of the nation.

The Honorable Harold C. Giss has been recognized by many as a powerful political leader and a man of high principle who always had time for any person seeking his counsel. His ability to bring opposing forces together, when it benefited the citizens of this state to do so, was widely acknowledged.

His fond devotion to his family and to the people of this state will be sorely missed.

His fervent desire for good to come to his state and nation and his example of untiring work toward that goal shall not be forgotten.

Therefore

Be it resolved by the Senate of the State of Arizona, the House of Representatives concurring:

That the Legislature, saddened by the death of the Honorable Senator Harold C. Giss, wishes to express its regret and extend condolences to his widow, Goldie Pearl Giss, and his three sons, Maurice, Kenneth and Gerald.

Unanimously adopted by the Senate—April 18, 1973

Unanimously adopted by the House of Representatives—April 18, 1973

Approved by the Governor—April 24, 1973

Filed in the Office of the Secretary of State—April 24, 1973