

Resolution Honoring Billy Jack Gregg

WHEREAS, Billy Jack Gregg has been a lawyer for over 30 years, and has served the people of the State of West Virginia, and the public interest, for twenty five of those years as Director of the Consumer Advocate Division of the West Virginia Public Service Commission since the office's creation in 1981; *and*

WHEREAS, During those other five years, Mr. Gregg warmed up for his score and five as THE “consumer advocate” by working as the Senior Staff Attorney in the Field Solicitor's Office of the U.S. Department of Interior in Charleston, West Virginia, in private practice in Hurricane, West Virginia; and as Assistant Attorney General assigned to the West Virginia Human Rights Commission; *and*

WHEREAS, As Consumer Advocate, Mr. Gregg has unquestionably effectively represented the best interests of West Virginians in all major proceedings affecting rates for electricity, gas, telephone and water during his tenure; *and*

WHEREAS, Mr. Gregg not only served as Treasurer (1996 to 2000) and as a member of the Executive Committee (1992-2000) of the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates, but was also chosen by that organization to represent it on the critically important Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Federal State Joint Board on Universal Service (March 2002-Present)ⁱⁱ and before that as a member of the Rural Task Force of the Federal/State Joint Board on Universal Service (1998-2001); *and*

WHEREAS, Some who have had the misfortune of being on the opposite side of an argument (*any* argument) from Billy Jack – have noted the similarity between Mr. Gregg's relative debating/oratory skill (with his boots on) and the martial talents of the protagonist in the low budget cult film “Billy Jack” (with his boots off) – a film that was, significantly, released *before* Mr. Gregg started his legal career – and wondered about the incredible resemblance...

You've got:

Due process, Mother's Day, supermarkets,
air conditioning, the FBI, Medicare,
AT&T, a 2-car garage, Congress, country
clubs, state troopers, the Constitution,
color television, and democracy.



They've got:

BILLY JACK

Starring TOM LAUGHLIN · DELORES TAYLOR
by Stanley CLARK HOWARD Screenplay by FRANK and TERESA GIBSTMAN Produced by MARY ROSE SOUTH Directed by T. C. FRANK
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...in tactics and success rate; *and*

WHEREAS, Billy Jack, in a transparent ploy to convince friends he is not completely infallible, also “did time” (the best way to describe this stage of his life – at least from the audience’s perspective) as a member of the “wildly successful” “Giant Sucking Sound” (Yes, that was the actual name of the band) which, given the band’s relative success (you’ve heard of them haven’t you?), also apparently turned out to be a surprising apt description of the band’s music; *and*

WHEREAS, Billy Jack obviously learned some serious life lessons there – as the band’s name - Giant Sucking Sound – likely also was an apt description of the money invested in the band whizzing into the ether - either way - according to one of his State colleagues (who asked to remain anonymous [it was Byron Harris] he got better with money: “Mr. Telecom doesn't own a cell phone. He's also been driving the same dilapidated pickup for 10 years. I'm not saying that Billy's cheap, but . . . he is the only person in the State’s history ever to make money on the per diem food allowance;” *and*

WHEREAS, Mr. Gregg, the archetype “Fighting Roo,” having attended the University of Glasgow, Scotland, and but, more importantly, received his B.A. in history and government from Austin College in Sherman, Texas, earned his J.D. degree from the University of Texas School of Law in Austin, Texas; *and*

WHEREAS, As NASUCA’s Joint Board Representative, Mr. Gregg has applied his keen insight and encyclopedic knowledge to the multiple issues pending before that body;ⁱⁱⁱ
and

WHEREAS, Former New York Commissioner, and ex-Joint Board member, Thomas Dunleavy, in a statement that could easily be attributed to anyone that has had the pleasure of working with Billy Jack noted recently: “Mr. Gregg brought wisdom, reason, responsibility, creativity, humor and rock solid recommendations -- all in the most CIVIL and COURTEOUS way imaginable -- to the Universal Service Joint Board making it a pleasure and a privilege to work with him and, more importantly, to have him as a friend;” *and*

WHEREAS, Mr. Gregg has testified numerous times over the years before the West Virginia Legislature, and before committees of both houses of Congress and has testified before committees of the legislatures of Virginia, Pennsylvania and Tennessee; *and*

WHEREAS, Many of his colleagues will reminisce of the years spent working with Mr. Gregg, remembering him as very informed, engaging, entertaining and refined, as well as a real voice for consumers; *now, therefore, be it*

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC), convened in its July 2007 Summer Meetings in New York, New York, extends its sincere appreciation to Billy Jack Gregg for his outstanding public service and conveys to him its best wishes for all his future endeavors.

Sponsored by the Committee on Telecommunications
Adopted by the NARUC Board of Directors July 18, 2007



ⁱ Billy Jack was also on the USAC board for a very brief period of time (he left because the FCC thought it would be a conflict to be on the USAC board and the USF Joint Board and - if you can imagine - he chose the Joint Board). In that brief time frame he provided advice, analyzed data in unique and interesting ways, and provided a real voice for consumers. We were very disappointed to see him resign. *Cheryl Parrino (former USAC CEO & former NARUC President)*

ⁱⁱ “In addition to the Giant Sucking Sound, another apt expression possibly coined by Billy Jack and definitely used by Billy Jack during recent Senate Commerce Committee hearings: Universal Service should provide ACCESS, NOT EXCESS. In those same Senate hearings, Senator Rockefeller introduced Billy Jack, calling him a true “visionary” on these matters. He can also be annoying – having been Billy Jack’s successor on USAC’s board of directors, it is not fair that Billy Jack often knew the latest filings, events and statistics before I did. It must be that “visionary” thing with which I can’t compete.” *Wayne R. Jortner, Senior Counsel, Maine Office of Public Advocate* “It’s no great secret among USF Joint Board members that Billy Jack has frequently and continually left them all with jaws dropped and eyes rolling when he quotes prior orders verbatim by order number and date. Visionary is one thing, but being able to recall and quote back to the members what we have decided in past decisions has been invaluable to the process.” *Earl Poucher*

ⁱⁱⁱ At the end of the first day of a conference during which Billy Jack and I had expressed our opinions about the state of the telecommunications industry, (Billy Jack with much more candor than I, as a Commissioner was able to muster) several industry representatives approached me about going to dinner. I indicated that I had previously invited Billy Jack to join me and one of the representatives made a comment that could be loosely translated as "not that rube from West Virginia." I assumed the comment was more a reflection of the speaker's disagreement with Billy Jack's views than a reflection on Billy Jack's character and indicated that I would be dining with Mr. Gregg, with or without them. We all wound up having dinner together and Billy Jack, in his customary fashion, turned out to be more informed, more engaging, more entertaining and yes, more refined than the rest of us.” *Bob Nelson (former Chair of the NARUC Communications Committee).*