

2026 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 55

BY SENATOR BOUDREAUX

CONDOLENCES. Expresses sincere and heartfelt condolences on the passing of Joseph Miles Cotton Sr.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To express the sincere and heartfelt condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of
3 Louisiana upon the passing of Joseph M. Cotton Sr.

4 WHEREAS, Joseph M. Cotton Sr., was born on March 25, 1941, in Alexandria,
5 Louisiana, to Sylvester G. Cotton Sr. and Delores Tassin Cotton; and

6 WHEREAS, Mr. Cotton passed away on Saturday, August 2, 2025, at the age of
7 eighty-four, lovingly surrounded by his devoted family. A product of strong faith and family
8 values, he committed his life to service, scholarship, and the upliftment of others; and

9 WHEREAS, Mr. Cotton was a lifelong educator and advocate for personal and
10 academic development. He was a proud graduate of St. James Catholic Elementary and High
11 School and Grambling State University, where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in
12 Secondary Education, followed by a master's degree in guidance and psychology from the
13 University of Southwestern Louisiana (now University of Louisiana at Lafayette), and
14 pursued doctoral studies in developmental education and student personnel. He was also a
15 Licensed Professional Counselor and held an Educational Specialist Certification in
16 Administration and Supervision; and

17 WHEREAS, Mr. Cotton's professional career spanned more than five decades,
18 impacting generations of students, families, and professionals across Louisiana and the

1 nation. Over his distinguished career, he served as a teacher and counselor in the St.
2 Martinville Parish school system, a college instructor, and a respected administrator with the
3 Louisiana Department of Education. From 1990 to his retirement, he served at the University
4 of Louisiana at Lafayette, most notably as Project Director for the Dr. Ronald E. McNair
5 Research Scholars Program, where he mentored and inspired countless first-generation and
6 underrepresented college students to pursue graduate studies; and

7 WHEREAS, his work extended beyond the classroom, as a nationally respected
8 speaker, consultant, and trainer in the areas of student development, prevention education,
9 and counseling. His work reached beyond Louisiana to national organizations, such as the
10 U.S. Department of Education, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), Students Against
11 Destructive Decisions (SADD), Boys & Girls Clubs of America, and numerous local and
12 national youth and prevention programs; and

13 WHEREAS, Mr. Cotton's life was marked by numerous accolades and honors,
14 including inclusion in Who's Who in the South and Southwest, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity,
15 Inc. "Man of the Year", Kiwanis Club Southwest "Outstanding Citizen of the Year", and
16 multiple awards from educational and counseling associations, reflecting a life of integrity,
17 impact, and excellence; and

18 WHEREAS, he faithfully served his community and his church, Immaculate Heart
19 of Mary Catholic Church, in various leadership and service roles including lector, parish
20 council member, and master of ceremonies for numerous church and community events; and

21 WHEREAS, a faithful member of Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church, Mr.
22 Cotton served in numerous ministries and community events. He was also a proud and
23 lifelong member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., initiated in 1960, and served as Past
24 President of the Eta Gamma Lambda Chapter, where he furthered educational and civic
25 engagement and exemplified the fraternity's aims of manly deeds, scholarship, and love for
26 all mankind throughout his life; and

27 WHEREAS, he was a loving and devoted husband, father, grandfather, brother, and
28 friend whose legacy lives on in the hearts of those he touched. He is survived by his
29 cherished partner in life and wife of sixty years, Virgie M. Syrie Cotton; his children, Cheryl
30 L. Cotton and Andre' Jamal Cotton; his grandchildren, Dr. Shelby A. Perkins and Jordan

