

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 53

BY SENATORS ALLAIN, ABRAHAM, BARROW, BERNARD, BOUDREAUX, BOUIE, CARTER, CATHEY, CLOUD, CONNICK, CORTEZ, FESI, FIELDS, FOIL, HARRIS, HENRY, HENSGENS, HEWITT, JACKSON, JOHNS, LAMBERT, LUNEAU, MCMATH, MILLIGAN, FRED MILLS, ROBERT MILLS, MIZELL, MORRIS, PEACOCK, PETERSON, POPE, PRICE, REESE, SMITH, TALBOT, TARVER, WARD, WHITE AND WOMACK

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To express the sincere condolences of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the death of the Honorable Dudley Anthony "Butch" Gautreaux Jr., renowned public servant, beloved gentleman, and a former member of both the Louisiana House of Representatives and the Louisiana Senate, and to celebrate his service and devotion to the law and the welfare of the people of the state of Louisiana.

WHEREAS, it was with deep remorse and a profound sense of sorrow that the Legislature of Louisiana learned of the sudden and unexpected passing of D.A. "Butch" Gautreaux Jr. on February 22, 2020, at the age of seventy-two; and

WHEREAS, Dudley Anthony "Butch" Gautreaux Jr. was born on December 12, 1947, the only son of six children born to parents, Dudley A. Gautreaux Sr. and Cora W. Gautreaux of Morgan City, Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, Butch Gautreaux was a native and long-term resident of Morgan City before retiring in Thibodaux, Louisiana, in 2017; and

WHEREAS, he was a 1966 Central Catholic High School graduate and then attended Nicholls State University, and he remained a loyal supporter throughout his life; and

WHEREAS, he was a veteran who proudly served his state and his country in the United States Navy from 1968 to 1972 as a 2nd Class Petty Officer; and

WHEREAS, "Butch" Gautreaux and his partner and friend, Kenny Zimmer, co-owned ZIMGO Company, a retail, appliance, automotive, and furniture multi-location establishment, where he was a small business owner for thirty years in Morgan City; and

WHEREAS, he was a problem solver and negotiator without par; his intelligence and depth of compassion made him an invaluable asset or a formidable opponent; and

WHEREAS, he was first elected to the Louisiana House of Representatives in 1996 and served one term until 2000, representing House District 51; and

WHEREAS, in the 2000 election cycle, "Butch" Gautreaux Jr. was elected to the Louisiana Senate and served from 2000 until 2012, representing the constituency of Senate District 21 until he term limited out; and

WHEREAS, serving as a legislator for sixteen years, he was a strong voice in Baton Rouge for the less fortunate, both in his constituency and statewide, and he led the efforts for saving Louisiana's wetlands, was an avid supporter of the local fishing industry, and was passionate about the fiscal management of the state, especially its retirement systems; and

WHEREAS, he was very active in local, professional, and civic organizations including St. Mary Arc; AARP; Morgan City Rotary, Past Treasurer and Paul Harris Fellow; Morgan City Civitan Club, Past Vice President; and the Louisiana Retailers' Association, Board Member; and

WHEREAS, after Hurricane Katrina, Senator Gautreaux took on insurance companies so that those who lost their homes could be compensated fairly and could rebuild, he also cared very deeply for teachers and state employees, and always demanded they be treated with respect; and

WHEREAS, he was known and respected as a tireless worker for the citizens of the state he loved so dearly; a true statesman, he didn't seek personal glory he merely knew no other pathway than the one that made him a pragmatic advocate for the least among us; and

WHEREAS, he was honored by the Senate Democratic Caucus, and selected Whip for his final legislative term; and

WHEREAS, Senator "Butch" Gautreaux was proud of the accomplishments that punctuated his service in the Louisiana State Legislature, serving as the chair of the Senate Committee on Retirement; as vice-chair of the Senate Natural Resources Committee; as a

member of the Senate committees on Health and Welfare and Transportation, Highways, and Public Works; as a member of the Senate select committees on Coastal Restoration and Flood Control, Consumer Affairs and Technology, Homeland Security, and the oversight of the Gulf Coast Claims Facility; as the Senate President's designee to the Public Retirement Systems' Actuarial Committee; and as an interim member of the Senate Committee on Revenue and Fiscal Affairs and the Joint Legislative Committee on Capital Outlay; and

WHEREAS, "Butch" Gautreaux Jr. was a staunch advocate for state employee and teacher retiree healthcare and retirement benefits, serving as a Senate appointee on the Office of Group Benefits Policy and Planning Board, protecting state-funded employee/teacher and retiree health and life insurance benefits, and leading the fight against defined contribution and other retirement plans in 2010 and 2011, thereby preserving state employee, teacher, school employee, and State Police defined benefit retirement plans, which still remain in effect until this day; and

WHEREAS, as the Senate Retirement Committee chairman, he also led the fight to enhance and protect retiree cost of living allowances (COLAs), thereby preserving the only mechanism, known as the Experience Account, needed to fund retiree permanent benefit increases or COLAs, and upon his retirement from the Louisiana Senate in 2012, Senator "Butch" Gautreaux was named a Board Member Emeritus of the Retired State Employees Association of Louisiana, in recognition of his body of work on behalf of state employees and retirees during his legislative tenure, serving with dignity in that capacity for approximately eight years until his passing in 2020; and

WHEREAS, he received numerous awards and accolades throughout his career, including but not limited to the 1997 Outstanding Rural Award, the 1998 Friend of the Parishes Award, the 2001 Louisiana Wildlife Federation Legislator of the Year Award, the 2004 Leonard J. Chabert Leadership Award, the 2006 Tobacco Free Living Legislative Champion Award, and the 2009 State Troopers' Association Legislator of the Year Award; and

WHEREAS, D.A. "Butch" Gautreaux Jr. touched so many lives in ways that will never be fully known except by the recipients of his kindness; he was always fair and loyal, and always tried to do what was right, even if it was not the popular thing to do; and

WHEREAS, he was a loving husband to his wife of fifty-one years, Marilyn (Mire) Gautreaux, a devoted father to his children, Michael and Rhonda Gautreaux and Lee and Stephanie Gautreaux; a cherished grandfather to his seven grandchildren, Alana Andras (Justin), Andrew "Buck", Andrew "Drew", Adrien, Abigail, and Katelyn; a treasured brother to his five sisters, JoAnne Hebert (Russell), Penny Russo, Gail Fazzio (Tony), Cora Phillips (Keith), Mary Gautreaux; and beloved uncle and relative to numerous nieces and nephews whose love of family was of utmost importance in his life; and

WHEREAS, in death, D.A. "Butch" Gautreaux Jr. leaves a tremendous void in his community and state, however, he also leaves a rich and unique legacy in the annals of Louisiana's political history, and he shall remain as a fond remembrance in the hearts of all who knew him; and

WHEREAS, D.A. "Butch" Gautreaux was a true and passionate statesman and the definition of a southern gentleman and the likes of him may not pass this way again.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express its sincere condolences upon the death of former legislator, the Honorable D.A. "Butch" Gautreaux Jr. and does hereby acknowledge the unique role he played in the development of the institutions of the state legislature that he loved and the extraordinary examples of leadership and humanity that he set throughout his life.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that his was a life well spent in public service and in service to his community, his state, his country, and his God.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to his wife, Marilyn Gautreaux.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES