

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 70

BY SENATORS JOHNS, ABRAHAM, ALLAIN, BARROW, BERNARD, BOUIE, CARTER, CATHEY, CLOUD, CONNICK, CORTEZ, FESI, FIELDS, FOIL, HARRIS, HENSGENS, HEWITT, LUNEAU, MCMATH, MILLIGAN, FRED MILLS, ROBERT MILLS, MIZELL, PEACOCK, 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 Dr. Henry Gremillion, DDS, MAGD, Dean of the LSU Health New Orleans School of Dentistry.

WHEREAS, it is with deep regret and profound sorrow that the members of the Legislature of Louisiana have learned of the passing of Dr. Henry Gremillion, on May 18, 2020; and

WHEREAS, a Louisiana native, he was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Bascom Gremillion, adopted at the age of seven months from an orphanage in north Louisiana and raised in Cottonport, a small Louisiana farming community with a population of about two thousand people; and

WHEREAS, after graduating from the LSU Health New Orleans School of Dentistry in 1977, Dr. Gremillion opened a practice in Cottonport where he saw patients from all walks of life – his neighbors, children in the Head Start Program, members of the Tunica-Biloxi Indian Tribe, and nursing home residents; and

WHEREAS, his service to his community went far beyond taking care of their oral health as he was a volunteer firefighter, a member of the local school board, and a member of the city council where he sought to implement community fluoridation and move forward with reapportionment to address the disparity in representation; and his many contributions were publicly recognized when he was named 1989 Cottonport Citizen of the Year; and

WHEREAS, the quest to learn more to improve the quality of life for his patients led to a two-year craniofacial pain fellowship at the University of Florida College of Dentistry (UFCD), and, instead of being a stepping stone to return to private practice back home in Louisiana, the fellowship led him to academic dentistry; and

WHEREAS, rising through the academic ranks, Dr. Gremillion was named the

Parker E. Mahan Endowed Professor of Orofacial Pain in the Department of Orthodontics and was a member of the dental staff of Shands Teaching Hospital; he also served as the director of the UFCD Parker Mahan Facial Pain Center and its fellowship program in craniomandibular dysfunction; and

WHEREAS, he returned to LSU in 2008 as the sixth dean since the founding of the school of dentistry and the only alumnus to hold the position, and continued the school's recovery from the devastation that followed Hurricane Katrina; he guided sorely needed renovations to improve the learning environment for students; the preclinical laboratories now rival those at any school anywhere; he enhanced patient care and research by completing the only new building on the dental school campus since it was founded, the \$31 million Allen A. Copping, DDS Advanced Clinical Care and Research Building which opened in 2018; and

WHEREAS, he led the state's only school of dentistry and the only one in the country with degree programs in dentistry, dental hygiene, and dental laboratory technology, but was most proud of his students and often spoke of their "giving nature"; he delighted in helping them with their community service projects like Give Kids a Smile Day and Adopt an Angel where you could see him wheeling bikes into elevators down to the lobby for pick up by the Salvation Army truck; and

WHEREAS, one of the programs closest to Dr. Gremillion's heart was the Summer Enrichment Program, the purpose of the program being to diversify dentistry by identifying and preparing students from underrepresented minority and disadvantaged backgrounds to be competitive for application to, and then succeed in, dental school and in so doing, changed the complexion of the dental school; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Gremillion's many honors include LSU Health New Orleans School of Dentistry Alumnus of Year in 2001, the school's highest alumnus award, and the University of Florida College of Dentistry Teacher of the Year in 2002 and 2007; and

WHEREAS, a beloved educator, the Florida Dental Association honored him as the Florida Dental Educator of the Year in 2002 and 2006; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Gremillion received the Louisiana Academy of General Dentistry Career Service Award in 2003 and a 2007 Distinguished Professor by the University of

Florida Blue Key Society; and

WHEREAS, in 2008, the American Academy of General Dentistry honored Dr. Gremillion with the prestigious Theodore V. Weclaw Award for contributions to the education of general dentists and, in 2009, the Dawson Academy honored him with its Career Service Award; in 2010, he received the American Academy of Orofacial Pain Service Award, and in 2015, was awarded the Pierre Fauchard Gold Medal, presented annually to a dentist in the United States who has made outstanding contributions to the progress and standing of the dental profession; one of the international dental honor organization's most prestigious and exclusive awards; and

WHEREAS, he was a member of the American Dental Association, Louisiana Dental Association, Academy of General Dentistry, Omicron Kappa Upsilon Honorary Dental Fraternity, American Academy of Orofacial Pain, American Pain Society, International Association for the Study of Pain, American Equilibration Society, American Association for Dental Research and International Association for Dental Research; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Gremillion was elected Chair of the Board of Directors of the American Dental Education Association, the sole national organization representing academic dentistry; and

WHEREAS, despite his national stature, Dr. Gremillion easily related to people from all walks of life as students, faculty, patients, members of the community, elected officials, and local, state, and national leaders all found him approachable, respectful, caring, engaged, and down to earth; and

WHEREAS, he was a dedicated doctor, a nationally recognized educator, and a visionary leader at local, state, and federal levels who inspired countless dental students throughout his time as dean of the state's only dental school and whose vision steered the school through expansions and renovations so that students can practice their skills in the most advanced preclinical labs in America; and

WHEREAS, his contributions to the dental profession in Louisiana and nationally are unparalleled; he leaves a legacy of professional standards, high ideals, integrity, quality education, and service that will continue to shape dental practice for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, with his passing dental education has lost a true gentleman, scholar, leader, and friend, and an incredible man, educator, and visionary; and

WHEREAS, his passion for the betterment of his beloved profession was powerful and sincere; he truly understood, and more importantly, valued the relationships between the school, the students, and the dental professionals; he worked tirelessly to make sure his students had the proper education, exposure, and experience to share in his vision of supporting all Louisiana communities; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Gremillion is survived by his wife of forty-five years, Karleen Mackey Gremillion; daughters Erin G. Jackson (Brad) and Lindsay G. Maples (Andy); and sons Alan Gremillion (Sarah) and Scott Gremillion (Wendy); as well as ten grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, he was one of the most respected in the world in his field of facial pain, who was loved by all for his love of sharing his knowledge and his kind demeanor, a mentor to many as a dentist and a loving person who will be dearly missed by his family, friends and colleagues.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express sincere and heartfelt condolences upon the death of Dr. Henry Gremillion, does hereby extend posthumous honor and tribute to Dr. Henry Gremillion for a distinguished career of excellence which was marked by his uncompromising endeavor to improve the LSU Health New Orleans School of Dentistry, the practice of dentistry, and the welfare of his fellow citizens, and to make Louisiana a better place to live, and does hereby recognize and record his singular and momentous contributions and achievements which will long be remembered and will long continue to be a source of pride for his family, his friends, and the state of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Karleen Mackey Gremillion and family.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES