

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 118

BY SENATORS BOUDREAUX AND HENSGENS

A RESOLUTION

To express the sincere condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the death of Justin Reid Ehrenwerth and to recognize and commend his outstanding contributions.

WHEREAS, it is with deep sadness and heavy hearts that we mourn the loss of Justin Reid Ehrenwerth; and

WHEREAS, Justin was born September 5, 1978, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and was one of two children of David H. Ehrenwerth, a prominent Pittsburgh attorney and the late Charlene "Kandy" Reidbord Ehrenwerth, a Pittsburgh litigator and activist who died in a car crash when Justin was thirteen years old; and

WHEREAS, Justin was a devoted and loving husband to Dana Dupré and father to sons Louis and Charles, and a loving older brother to sister Lindsey Ehrenwerth Herman; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Ehrenwerth graduated summa cum laude from Colby College and held an MA in Philosophy, Politics and Economics from the University of Oxford and a J.D. from the University of Pennsylvania Law School; and

WHEREAS, early in his distinguished career, Mr. Ehrenwerth was active in the nonprofit sector having worked at the University of Pittsburgh Institute of Politics, Northern California Grantmakers, Pennsylvania League of Young Voters, the American Jewish Committee, and he also served as a Marshall-Brennan Constitutional Literacy Teaching Fellow, as well as a Coro Fellow in Public Affairs; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Ehrenwerth served in the United States Department of Commerce, Office of General Counsel where he assisted with the management of over three hundred lawyers in fourteen offices and ultimately received the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) General Counsel's Award for Excellence for work related to the response to the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill; and

WHEREAS, Justin then served as assistant counsel to President Barack Obama, where he took the lead on BP Deepwater Horizon litigation for the White House working with the United States Department of Justice and subsequently served as the inaugural executive director of the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Ehrenwerth then served as chief of staff to the deputy secretary of the United States Department of Commerce where he assisted in overseeing issues of policy, budgeting, and strategic planning and focused on matters impacting NOAA, including complex regulatory and management challenges; and

WHEREAS, he served as the inaugural executive director of the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (Council), which was created in the aftermath of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill and charged with directing billions of dollars in penalties to restore the Gulf Coast's economy and environment, and adapt in the face of climate change; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Ehrenwerth successfully established the Council as an independent federal agency and oversaw all aspects of its programmatic, technical, and operational activities; and

WHEREAS, in 2017, he was appointed the second president and chief executive officer of The Water Institute of the Gulf, which is an independent, nonprofit, applied research institution developing integrated methods to address environmental and societal challenges that was established in 2011 to advance our knowledge of natural and human aspects of deltaic, coastal, and water management systems; and

WHEREAS, in recent years Mr. Ehrenwerth's commitment to service continued as a member of the Board of Directors of Touro Synagogue as well as the Anti-Defamation League's South Central Region, where he was an active voice on the Civil Rights Committee, and he was a member of Louisiana's Committee of 100 for Economic Development; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Ehrenwerth, who has called Louisiana home since 2013, was a nationally recognized expert in coastal policy and applied science at the national and Gulf of Mexico level and throughout his career and personal life he worked tirelessly to make a more resilient Gulf Coast and a stronger Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, when asked about his favorite things, they included walks with his boys on the levee near his house, attending Jazz Fest with his family, traveling both internationally and locally often by kayak to explore Louisiana, playing the harmonica, and his hometown sports team, the Pittsburgh Steelers; and

WHEREAS, left to cherish the untold memories of Justin Reid Ehrenwerth are his children, his loving wife, his father, a host of friends, colleagues, and communities he served by his generous work and his dedication to, and enthusiasm for, protecting the Gulf.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby extend full-hearted and fervent condolences to the family of Justin Reid Ehrenwerth on the occasion of his death and does further acknowledge his substantive contributions to the state of Louisiana, the Gulf Coast region, and the world's pursuit of greater environmental sustainability and resilience; as well as his commitment to applying the best available science to guide and develop policies and projects capable of protecting people, the economy, and the environment from natural hazards.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the family of Justin Reid Ehrenwerth as a token of our heartfelt sympathy and appreciation for his extraordinary contributions, inspiring us all to be stewards of our natural world.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE