

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 153

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

A RESOLUTION

To commend the Honorable Patrick Page Cortez, Senate President, on his sixteen years of dedicated public service in the Legislature of Louisiana and to express enduring gratitude for his outstanding contributions made on behalf of his constituents of Lafayette Parish and the state of Louisiana, particularly during his tenure as a distinguished member of the Louisiana Senate representing District No. 23 and the Louisiana House of Representatives representing District No. 43.

WHEREAS, Patrick Page Cortez was born in Lafayette, Louisiana, to Marion and Tracy Cortez who taught him the importance of hard work, relying on your faith, and treating all people with respect and dignity; and

WHEREAS, his father passed along many tidbits of advice and one that has served Senator Cortez well in politics, "Make sure that you hear both sides of the story before you decide"; and

WHEREAS, after graduating Lafayette High, he obtained bachelor's degrees in education and general studies from the University of Southwestern Louisiana, now known as the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, where he pledged Sigma Nu fraternity; and

WHEREAS, Senator Cortez met the woman of his dreams, Angela Stoma, in the fall of 1983 and the lovebirds were married in 1985; and

WHEREAS, Senator Cortez has a lifelong passion for coaching and his first coaching and teaching job was at Catholic High in New Iberia; and

WHEREAS, he later moved to Lafayette High, his alma mater, where he taught Advanced American History and coached football, basketball, and track; and

WHEREAS, when his children were young, Senator Cortez left Lafayette High and became an active participant in his family business which allowed him to spend more time

with his wife and children; and

WHEREAS, he coached his son Matthew in almost every sport he played until high school, never missing a game, and he also never missed a dance review or game where his daughter Maria cheered; and

WHEREAS, in 2007, with the encouragement of family and friends, Patrick Page Cortez ran for and won the House of Representatives District No. 43 seat; and

WHEREAS, in his only term as a Representative, he was appointed to the House Committee on Appropriations, where he quickly mastered the budget process and was known to carry a copy of the state constitution for reference during debates; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure in the House of Representatives, then-Representative Cortez's committee service included the House Committee on Insurance, House Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Business Development, and the House Committee on Retirement; and

WHEREAS, in the 2011 election, Patrick Page Cortez won the Senate District No. 23 seat unopposed, was reelected in 2015 with 84% of the vote, and was reelected again without opposition in 2019; and

WHEREAS, upon his election to the upper chamber, Senator Cortez brought his keen business insight and corporate background to full measure with service on the standing committees including membership on Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and International Affairs, Senate Committee on Retirement, Senate Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works, serving as chairman, Senate Committee on Local and Municipal Affairs, Senate Committee on Natural Resources, and Senate Committee on Education; and

WHEREAS, in 2020, Senator Cortez was unanimously chosen by his colleagues to serve as their President; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure as Senate President, he served proudly on the Revenue Estimating Conference, Joint Legislative Committee on the Budget, Joint Legislative Committee on Capital Outlay, Senate Executive Committee, Capitol Security Council, serving as co-chairman, Interim Emergency Board, serving as chairman, Legislative Budgetary Control Council, Senate Select Committee on Coastal Restoration and Flood

Control, Joint Select Committee on Louisiana Economic Recovery, serving as co-chairman, State Bond Commission, Coastal Protection and Restoration Financing Corporation, Governor's Task Force on Transportation Infrastructure Investment, Latino Commission, Louisiana Transportation Authority, The Energy Council, Office Facilities Corporation, Select Committee on High School Interscholastic Athletics, Senate Presidents' Forum, and the Special Study Committee of the Senate on Legislative Sessions; and

WHEREAS, Senator Cortez is known amongst his colleagues for his approachable nature and willingness to work across party lines; and

WHEREAS, as Senate President, he has promoted the independence of the Senate while he improved communications with the House of Representatives; and

WHEREAS, President Cortez has proven to be a leader of boundless energy and ability, a person of great empathy and vision, and an effective coalition builder; and

WHEREAS, while serving in the Legislature, he has been a consistent supporter of teachers' pay raises, funding for education, funding transportation projects to address construction backlog, investments for the completion of I-49 north and south, funding for the megaprojects to address necessary improvements to roads, bridges, and state highways, funding for retirement systems, and funding for the University of Louisiana at Lafayette; and

WHEREAS, developing a deep love and affection for horses and horse racing as a child, President Cortez has been a champion for Louisiana horsemen and the industry as a whole; he is the recipient of numerous awards and accolades such as the Louisiana Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association's Triple Crown Award, the Gold Standard Award, the Lifetime Achievement Award, and the first ever inductee into the Louisiana Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association's Hall of Fame, as well as having a stakes race at the Fairgrounds named in his honor; and

WHEREAS, Senator Cortez does not miss an opportunity to attend the Kentucky Derby and attends as many races around the country as his schedule will allow, and he currently owns a thoroughbred named My Sweet Sophia; and

WHEREAS, Senator Cortez has been the recipient of numerous tributes in recognition of his legislative service and was especially honored to receive the "LegisGator of the Year" award for 2022 from the Southwest Louisiana Chamber of Commerce; and

WHEREAS, many civic and nonprofit agencies have also benefitted from his expertise and active participation including the Association of Educators of Louisiana, American Legislative Exchange Council, Broussard Chamber of Commerce, Youngsville Chamber of Commerce, Our Lady of Fatima School Board, Lafayette Parks and Recreation Commission, Acadiana Outreach, Boys and Girls Club, Miles Perret-Games of Acadiana, Louisiana High School Coaches' Association, and the Breast Cancer of Acadiana Foundation; and

WHEREAS, although the intense demands of public life and civic duty draw heavily upon his time and keep him quite busy, his first concern is always his close-knit family, his wife of thirty-eight years, Angela Stoma Cortez, and their two treasured children, son, Matthew, and Matthew's wife, Jessica, and daughter, Maria, and Maria's husband, Eric, as well as his precious granddaughters, Sophia and Emma; and

WHEREAS, he and his family operate two retail furniture stores in Lafayette and Senator Cortez often says that, "It is the hard work done by my family back home that allows me the time to serve"; and

WHEREAS, Senator Cortez also credits his legislative success to his loyal and trusted legislative assistant Julie Sandridge who has taken care of their constituents for sixteen years; and

WHEREAS, Senator Cortez enjoys learning the French language almost as much as he enjoys French wine; he is a true Oenophile; and

WHEREAS, President Cortez is an aficionado of all types of music, can name a tune in one note, and often sings the song as well; he plays the guitar and was in the bands Guidostock and the Page Cortez Band, aka Too Many Guitars, where they played for various fundraising charities; he also played with the band Bayou Roux at the Rendezvous Music Festival in France; and

WHEREAS, Senator Cortez is a history buff and takes pleasure in telling visitors to the capitol about the history of the building and its architecture; and

WHEREAS, to his friends and family, he has shown himself to be the ultimate optimist, the go-to for answers to trivia questions, and the master of remembering statistics, scores, and plays in detail from games played years ago; and

WHEREAS, Senator Cortez is a believer in the strength of community, the principles of democracy, the importance of family and friends, the joy of life, and most importantly, the unfailing love of God; he was raised in a Catholic family and has always trusted and honored his faith and it has been his moral compass in decision-making; and

WHEREAS, Senator Cortez is especially grateful for the support of his loving family and as he prepares to begin the next exciting and productive chapter of his life, he merits a sincere measure of commendation for his sixteen years of distinguished public service in the Legislature of Louisiana.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend and congratulate the Honorable Patrick Page Cortez, extending honor and recognition to him for his outstanding accomplishments, particularly during his tenure as a member of the Louisiana Senate and the Louisiana House of Representatives, which has been forever marked by his noble efforts to improve the welfare of his constituents and the citizens of the great state of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby extend best wishes to our friend and colleague in all his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Honorable Patrick Page Cortez, President of the Senate of the state of Louisiana.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE