

2023 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 173

BY SENATOR WHITE

CONDOLENCES. Express condolences upon the death of James "Jim" Edwin Champagne.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To express the sincere condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the  
3 death of James "Jim" Edwin Champagne.

4 WHEREAS, it is with great sadness that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana  
5 has learned of the passing of James "Jim" Edwin Champagne; and

6 WHEREAS, on the afternoon of Sunday, April 2, 2023, at the age of 79, Denham  
7 Springs resident James "Jim" Edwin Champagne passed away; and

8 WHEREAS, Jim Champagne's passing follows closely behind that of his beloved  
9 wife, Darlene Reinert Champagne, who passed on March 13, 2023; and

10 WHEREAS, Jim Champagne was born on March 12, 1944, to Edwin C. "Brother"  
11 Champagne and Margret "Peggy" Atkin Champagne in Laurel, Maryland; and

12 WHEREAS, Jim grew up in Baton Rouge, was a 1962 graduate of Catholic High  
13 School, and served five years in the Louisiana National Guard; and

14 WHEREAS, Jim was a graduate of the Northwestern University of Traffic Institute  
15 in Evanston, Illinois, and he also held a bachelor of arts degree from Southeastern Louisiana  
16 University in Hammond, Louisiana; and

17 WHEREAS, Jim Champagne had a long and distinguished career as a Louisiana  
18 State Trooper serving twenty-one years, seven months, and twenty-three days, and retiring

1 at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel; and

2 WHEREAS, in 1996, Jim Champagne was appointed Louisiana's Governor's  
3 Highway Safety Representative (GR) and as chairman of the Governor's Highway Safety  
4 Association; Jim's dedication and perseverance resulted in countless lives being saved; and

5 WHEREAS, during his tenure, Jim Champagne passionately advocated for highway  
6 safety changes in Louisiana, despite a socio-economic culture that was challenging to  
7 highway safety and a pervasive attitude of permissiveness toward drinking and driving; and

8 WHEREAS, always seeking impactful strategies for highway safety, Jim worked  
9 tirelessly to develop the evidence and arguments to pass legislation as well as uphold the  
10 constitutionality of Louisiana's sobriety laws and seatbelt laws; and

11 WHEREAS, given Jim Champagne's success in Louisiana, his expertise was sought  
12 at the national level; his service included stints on the national boards of Operation Lifesaver  
13 and Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD); and

14 WHEREAS, Jim's leadership and success resulted in numerous awards and  
15 recognitions including the J. Stannard Baker Award from the International Association of  
16 Chiefs of Police and the Highway Safety Partner Award from Mothers Against Drunk  
17 Driving (MADD) as well as awards from the National Commission Against Drunk Driving  
18 and SADD, and

19 WHEREAS, in his more than forty year career, Jim Champagne brought unmatched  
20 commitment, passion, and zeal to highway safety; and

21 WHEREAS, Jim Champagne spent his second retirement playing golf, cheering on  
22 the Louisiana State University Tigers, and being PawPaw; and

23 WHEREAS, Jim Champagne is survived by his stepson, Philip Melancon and his  
24 partner Chris Guillotte; grandchildren Elizabeth and Alexander Melancon; daughter,  
25 Michelle Champagne; son, Michael Champagne; and brother, Bill Champagne; and

26 WHEREAS, Jim was preceded in death by Darlene, his beloved wife of thirty-eight  
27 years, his parents, and his sister Jane.

28 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana  
29 does hereby express sincere and heartfelt condolences upon the death of James "Jim" Edwin  
30 Champagne, and hereby extend deep appreciation for his many contributions to the state of

1 Louisiana.

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to

3 Phillip Melancon.

---

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part  
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Kathy Liberty.

---

SR 173 Original

DIGEST  
2023 Regular Session

White

Expresses condolences upon the death of James "Jim" Edwin Champagne.