

2025 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 193

BY REPRESENTATIVES CARPENTER, LAFLEUR, AND MARCELLE

A RESOLUTION

To express the condolences of the House of Representatives on the death of former state legislator and mayor-president of East Baton Rouge Parish Melvin Lee "Kip" Holden and to posthumously commend him for a lifetime of significant achievements.

WHEREAS, it is with immense sadness and profound regret that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana has learned of the passing, on May 14, 2025, of former state legislator and mayor-president of East Baton Rouge Parish, Melvin Lee "Kip" Holden; and

WHEREAS, Kip Holden was born on August 12, 1952, to Rosa May Rogers and Curtis Holden in New Orleans, Louisiana; he graduated from Scotlandville Senior High School in Baton Rouge in 1970 and earned a bachelor of arts degree in journalism from the Louisiana State University Manship School of Mass Communication in 1974; and

WHEREAS, after completing his undergraduate studies, Kip pursued a career in radio broadcasting and was hired as a news director for WXOK Radio in Baton Rouge; he later relocated to New Orleans and served as a reporter for WWL Radio, and in 1978, he became a reporter for WBRZ Channel 2; and

WHEREAS, Kip attended graduate school at Southern University and earned a master of arts degree in journalism in 1982; he also began accepting roles within the public sector, working as a public relations specialist for the United States Census Bureau, a public information officer for the Baton Rouge City Police Department, and a law clerk for the Louisiana Department of Labor Office of Workers' Compensation; and

WHEREAS, Kip entered politics in 1984, when he was elected as the councilman representing District 2 on the Baton Rouge Metro Council; he received a juris doctorate from the Southern University Law Center in 1985, and he was elected to represent District No. 63 as a distinguished member of the Louisiana House of Representatives in 1988 and served

until 2002; he was then elected to served as the Louisiana State Senator from District No. 15 and served from 2002 to 2004; and

WHEREAS, Kip was elected to serve as mayor-president of East Baton Rouge Parish in 2004 as the first African American mayor-president in parish history; as mayor, he enacted policies that included the Green Light Baton Rouge Citizens Council and aided the revitalization of downtown Baton Rouge; he also established an HIV/AIDS task force devoted to an education, prevention, and awareness campaign concerning the disease, and he launched economic development initiatives aimed at promoting minority-owned businesses; and

WHEREAS, following the devastation wrought by Hurricane Katrina in 2005, Mayor Holden led efforts to provide refuge for many New Orleans evacuees; he made a rare personal address to the U.S. Senate seeking additional federal funding to help address the destruction throughout the region; he won re-election in 2008 and 2012 and left office in 2016; and

WHEREAS, Melvin Lee "Kip" Holden is survived by his wife, Lois, and his five children; he was a true trailblazer who inspired a new generation of public servants in Louisiana, and he will be forever remembered for his *joie de vivre* and passion for serving his community.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express heartfelt condolences on the death of former state legislator and mayor-president of East Baton Rouge Parish Melvin Lee "Kip" Holden; does hereby posthumously commend him for a lifetime of significant achievements; and does hereby extend enduring appreciation for his many contributions to the city and parish of East Baton Rouge and the state of Louisiana.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES