

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 113

BY SENATOR BOUDREAUX

A RESOLUTION

To express the sincere and heartfelt condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the passing of Martha Elizabeth Odom.

WHEREAS, it is with sincere regret and immense sorrow that members of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana have learned of the passing of Martha Elizabeth Odom, on April 23, 2026, at the age of seventeen; and

WHEREAS, Martha was welcomed into this world on May 23, 2008, in Biloxi, Mississippi, to her loving parents, Michael and Brooke Bingham Odom, and later made her home in Lafayette, Louisiana, where she flourished into a multitalented, compassionate, intelligent, inspiring, and remarkable young woman; and

WHEREAS, Martha was thoughtful, intentional, and lived each and every moment with purpose; and

WHEREAS, she studied and trained in classical ballet her entire life, maturing into a talented and beautiful ballerina, and shared her talents on stage in ten performances of the Lafayette Ballet Theatre's production of *The Nutcracker*; and

WHEREAS, the Ballet Studio was a formative place where she found joy, strength, and peace, and through her dance training, she developed a love for teaching young dancers and gained the discipline and inner confidence to explore and embrace other art forms; and

WHEREAS, throughout her high school career at Ascension Episcopal School, Martha pursued theater, writing, and music with the same steadfast dedication she applied to all her endeavors, appearing in five school musicals and three plays, earning recognition in the Writes of Spring Regional Writing Contest for her undeniable gift as a storyteller, and receiving multiple short fiction awards for three consecutive years; and

WHEREAS, in addition to her artistic accomplishments, Martha was a standout softball player, playing on the junior varsity and varsity teams and earning freshman all-

district honorable mention; she was a leader on the varsity soccer team for four years, being voted the happiest team player and team captain during her senior season; and during her senior year she was selected for the varsity tennis team; and

WHEREAS, to further broaden her horizons, Martha was an active member in several school clubs including the Creative Writing Club, Robotics Club, Beta Club, Mu Alpha Theta, National English Honor Society, and Rho Kappa National Social Studies Honor Society; and

WHEREAS, through her experiences, Martha emerged into a strong, thoughtful, natural leader; she was selected to attend Louisiana Girls State and she served as Editor-in-Chief of *The Authored Ascension*, her school's paper, as an Ascension Ambassador, and as the communications officer for Rho Kappa National Social Studies Honor Society; and

WHEREAS, Martha's presence and abilities were noticed by many with school counselors recounting how "Martha is undaunted by challenges, and even with her quiet nature, she does not shy away from approaching a microphone, stepping into the spotlight, or speaking her mind"; and

WHEREAS, in her free time, Martha could often be found curled up with a book and a matcha beverage, or playing cards and board games with friends; she cherished car rides with her sister, listening to their favorite songs on the way to school, and she was honored to be presented at the Krewe of Gabriel 2025 Fall Ball, where she was escorted by and danced the night away with her father; and

WHEREAS, upon graduation, Martha was accepted to attend the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee, as a member of the class of 2030, where she planned to major in English and Creative Writing and Rhetoric, and minor in Dance; and

WHEREAS, Martha was preceded in death by her paternal grandparents, Dr. James C. and Martha Tolley Davis Odom and her uncle, James Calhoun "Cal" Odom, Jr.; and

WHEREAS, Martha leaves behind family and friends who will cherish her memory, including her parents; her sister, Margaret Odom; maternal grandparents, Kenneth and Joan Bingham; godmother, Allison Clarke; her aunts and uncles, Brent and Gina Bingham, Suzanne Odom, Cade and Dave Cheshire, Catherine and Tom Pankey; and a host of cousins who loved and adored her; and

WHEREAS, Martha Elizabeth Odom was a light to everyone around her and recognized and nurtured that same light in others; she carried herself with quiet strength and grace and will be remembered by all those who knew her for her unwavering compassion, wit, wisdom, sense of humor, and her breathtaking smile.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby honor the life of Martha Elizabeth Odom and her numerous accomplishments during her short life and does hereby express the sincere and heartfelt condolences to the family of Martha Elizabeth Odom.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Martha's parents, Michael and Brooke Bingham Odom.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE