

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 8

BY SENATOR JOHNS

A RESOLUTION

To express the sincere condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the death of Russell J. Stutes Sr.

WHEREAS, it is with deep regret and profound sorrow that the citizens of Louisiana learned of the death of Russell J. Stutes Sr. on December 22, 2015; and

WHEREAS, Russell Joseph Stutes Sr. was born in Crowley on January 9, 1938, to Rena and Horace Stutes; and

WHEREAS, he graduated from high school in Crowley in 1955 and attended one semester at Southwest Louisiana Institute; and

WHEREAS, in 1956, Mr. Stutes' mother became gravely ill and he withdrew from college and traveled to Lake Charles to pursue employment; and

WHEREAS, after arriving in Lake Charles, he soon met and fell in love with the wonderful woman he would ask to be his wife, Sharon Bennett; and

WHEREAS, they were married on February 20, 1957, and their children, Lisa, Christi, Rusty, and Leslie, were born from their union and made their family complete; and

WHEREAS, in 1959, as a young husband and father, Mr. Stutes began working as an operator for Cities Services, and in the early 1960s, he discovered an unexpected career as a carpenter when a coworker suggested a way to supplement his income; and

WHEREAS, by the early 1970s, he was working two full-time jobs as an operator on the graveyard shift and as a contractor during the day; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Stutes continued working two jobs until 1980 when family and friends convinced him to focus solely on custom construction, and by the mid-1980s, the product of his craft resulted in "Russell Stutes" being synonymous with superior construction; and

WHEREAS, he treasured and remained ever loyal to his vendors, employees, and customers, and his passion and joy for exceptional craftsmanship is on display in thousands of homes throughout southwest Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, he was an avid hunter and fisherman, and loved spending quality time with his extended family and friends; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Stutes was proud of his Catholic upbringing and sent his children and grandchildren to Catholic school; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Stutes is survived by his devoted and loving wife of fifty-nine years, Sharon "Cissy" Gayle Bennett Stutes; four children, Evelyn "Lisa" Stutes, Christina "Christi" Clark, Russell "Rusty" J. Stutes Jr., and Leslie Milligan; twelve grandchildren, Elisabeth Landry, Stacy Pierson, Laura Roth, Megan Cannon, Haley Clark, Russ Stutes, Louis Stutes, Alexandra Stutes, Abbie Grace Milligan, Gus Milligan, Hank Milligan, and Mary-Elise Milligan; a sister, Linda Kate Laurents; and eleven great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, he was preceded in death by his parents, Rena and Horace Stutes; and one sister, Mary Stutes Nunez; and

WHEREAS, with the death of Russell J. Stutes Sr., Louisiana has lost one of its finest sons, a quintessential southern gentleman who loved his community and whose accomplishments have left an indelible mark upon his community and state; and

WHEREAS, his death has left a substantial void in the Lake Charles community and a sense of loss in the citizens whose lives he touched, and his memory shall live forever in the minds and hearts of all those who knew and loved this remarkable gentleman.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express sincere and heartfelt condolences upon the death of Russell J. Stutes Sr., records for posterity his outstanding achievements, and extends enduring appreciation for the tremendous pride and honor that he will forever bring to his community and to the state of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the family of Russell J. Stutes Sr.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE