

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 7

BY SENATORS CLAITOR, LAMBERT, LUNEAU, MARTINY, MILKOVICH,  
MORRELL, PETERSON, GARY SMITH AND WARD

A RESOLUTION

To express the sincere condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the death of A. N. "Thanassi" Yiannopoulos, an outstanding law professor, scholar, and reviser of the Louisiana Civil Code.

WHEREAS, it is with great sadness that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana has learned of the passing of Athanassios Nicholas "Thanassi" Yiannopoulos, a civil law professor who taught at both the Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center and Tulane University Law School; and

WHEREAS, known as "Thanassi" to his friends and "Yippy" to his law students, Yiannopoulos was a brilliant intellectual and legal scholar; he was a legal theorist without par, having earned impressive credentials that included a Diploma in Law, Doctor of Laws, Master of Civil Law, Master of Laws, Doctor of Juridical Science, and Doctor of Jurisprudence; and

WHEREAS, his advanced degrees were earned from the University of Thessaloniki (Greece), the University of Chicago as a Fulbright Scholar, the University of California, Berkeley, and University of Cologne (Germany); and

WHEREAS, a third-generation attorney, Yippy was born in northern Greece in 1928; during World War II, he was a revolutionary in the youth resistance against the fascist occupation of his homeland; after the war, he obtained his law degree, served in the military, then immigrated to the United States to attend the University of Chicago; and

WHEREAS, while teaching at the University of Cologne in Germany, he was approached to become an associate professor at LSU, which he accepted in 1958; and

WHEREAS, in 1968, he began revisions to the Louisiana Civil Code, a body of work that would dominate much of his time and attention during his professional career; and

WHEREAS, with its origins in France, Spain and ancient Rome, the civil code is the primary source of private law in Louisiana, based in legislation rather than in case law; and

WHEREAS, his scholarship reshaped Louisiana civil law and his teaching has produced multiple generations of attorneys, judges, and law professors; and

WHEREAS, his lectures and stories were epic, and his wrath and rapier wit befell the ill-prepared law student who, when called upon, did not produce an informed and detailed explanation of the class assignment; and

WHEREAS, he published widely in the fields of civil law, comparative law, conflict of laws, property, and admiralty; he acted as reporter for the Louisiana Law Institute, editor of the Pamphlet Edition of the Louisiana Civil Code for West's Publishing, and authored three volumes of the civil law treatise series, numerous textbooks, and countless law review articles; and

WHEREAS, his revisions of civil code provisions on quasi-contracts became law in 1996, on representation and mandate in 1998, on deposit and sequestration in 2003, and on loan in 2004; and

WHEREAS, throughout the 1970s and 1980s he assisted in amending nearly every article of the Louisiana Civil Code affecting property, including acquisitive prescription, usufruct, nuisance, enclosed estates, and the classification of things; and

WHEREAS, he was a member of the International Academy of Comparative Law at the Hague and the American Law Institute, and was a founder of the Civil Law Commentaries; and

WHEREAS, proclaimed as one of Louisiana's most influential scholars, his expertise went beyond the general precepts of property, civil law, and common law; his scholarship embraced current English law, old English law, German civil law, French civil law from the early 1800s, French civil law today, Greek civil law, ancient Greek legal systems, and much more; and

WHEREAS, in 1979, Yiannopoulos became an Eason-Weinmann Professor of Comparative Law after accepting an endowed chair from Tulane Law School; after thirty years, he retired from the full-time faculty but continued as Professor Emeritus to teach one course each year; and

WHEREAS, Yippy believed that civil law played a fundamental role in a balanced legal system, and reformation of the Louisiana Civil Code was his passion; he garnered the respect and praise of his peers; he was admired by his students even when he was, at times, difficult; and his intellectual brilliance had no match; and

WHEREAS, Professor A. N. Yiannopoulos is survived by his wife, Mirta Valdes; a daughter, Maria; three sons, Nicholas, Alexander, and Philip; three granddaughters, Sophia, Christina, and Caroline; a sister, and legions of friends and professional colleagues.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express sincere and heartfelt condolences upon the death of former LSU and Tulane law professor, A. N. "Thanassi" Yiannopoulos.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby acknowledge his legacy of scholarship and expertise of the Louisiana Civil Code and his many contributions made for the betterment of the legal system of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to his wife, Mirta V. Yiannopoulos.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE