

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 94

BY SENATOR MORRISH

A RESOLUTION

To express the sincere condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the death of John Daniel Gielen III, of Crowley.

WHEREAS, John Daniel Gielen III, affectionately known as John Dan, was born to John Daniel II, and Julia John Gielen on October 18, 1938, in Crowley, Louisiana, where he spent most of his life; and

WHEREAS, John Dan graduated from St. Michael Catholic High School and earned a degree in history from Mississippi College; and

WHEREAS, in 1959, John Dan married his sweetheart, Peggy Angelle, and together they raised four daughters; and

WHEREAS, John Dan fulfilled his dream of going into business in May of 1966 when he opened a ShopRite store; from the first store, the Gielen business empire has grown to include thirty-five ShopRite stores, twenty-five Tobacco Plus stores, and Church Point Wholesale; more than one thousand people in fifteen parishes are employed by Gielen businesses; and

WHEREAS, John Gielen was a dedicated, civic-minded man who served on the St. Michael Catholic High School, Notre Dame High School, and Acadia Parish School boards, and on the board of directors of the National Association of Tobacco Outlets; he was a member of the Knights of Columbus and avidly supported the youth in Acadia Parish; Mr. Gielen was recognized as Business Man of the Year in 1998 by the Crowley Chamber of Commerce; and

WHEREAS, a humble man who gave freely of himself for others, John Dan Gielen was a leader in fundraising in Acadia Parish for St. Jude's Children Hospital; his businesses have raised more than a million dollars for St. Jude; and

WHEREAS, in 2012, Mr. Gielen funded the construction of Freedom Plaza in Duson to pay tribute to the nation's armed forces; Freedom Plaza honors the five military branches of the United States and features a ten-foot high monument engraved with the names of natives of Acadia, Lafayette, St. Landry, and Vermilion parishes whose lives were lost in combat in U.S. wars from World War II to present; and

WHEREAS, John Dan was a believer in God who actively practiced his faith through an honorable devotion to the Blessed Mother; he carried his cross with a quiet, gentle grace, and his Christianity was evident to employees and customers alike; proud of his German and Lebanese heritage, John Dan was ever thankful to God for the privilege to pursue opportunities in America; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Gielen valued the gift of his family, who are left to cherish his memory: his wife of fifty-nine years, Peggy; his daughters, Shawne Gardiner and her husband Todd, Arlise and Tracey Gielen, and Heidi Viator and her husband Durk; his sister, Mary Anne Stefanski and her husband Steve; his brother, L.J. and his wife Chee Chee; his grandchildren, Sumar Griffith and her husband Jeremy, Brynne, Lauren, Todd, Marianne, Gabriel, and Alex Gardiner, Madeline Dupuis and her husband Lance, Cody Gielen and his wife Nicole, Annelise and Joseph Gerami, Regan Lormand and her husband Blaine, Jordan Viator and his wife Elizabeth, Christian Viator and his wife Lacey, Katherine, Anne-Claire, Joshua, Jacob, Mary Grace, and Juliette Viator; and seventeen great-grandchildren; through his family and his businesses, John Daniel Gielen III, has left an indelible mark on the fabric of the state of Louisiana.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby extend sincere and heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of John Daniel Gielen III, upon his passing and does hereby offer prayers and hopes for peace and comfort to those who mourn him.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Peggy Angelle Gielen.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE