

2020 Second Extraordinary Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 36

BY SENATORS JOHNS AND ABRAHAM

CONDOLENCES. Expresses condolences upon the death of Marilyn "Cissie" Qualls McLeod.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To express the sincere condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the  
3 death of Lady Marilyn "Cissie" Qualls McLeod.

4 WHEREAS, Lady Marilyn "Cissie" McLeod, known to many family and friends as  
5 "Mamma McLeod", "Lady Cissie", "Mimi", or "The Mimster", passed from this life on  
6 October 19, 2020, at the age of eighty-three, a living legend in Lake Charles; and

7 WHEREAS, Cissie McLeod was a classic lady as well known for her cultural  
8 endeavors as her quick wit and contagious smile; she possessed an innate self-confidence,  
9 pursued many interests, and supported numerous issues and institutions that were very close  
10 to her heart; and

11 WHEREAS, she was a fifth-generation resident of Lake Charles and a member of  
12 the A.A. Nelson family, a founding family of the community; and

13 WHEREAS, Cissie McLeod was raised in the First United Methodist Church and  
14 then married the Presbyterian preacher's son, fondly saying that she went into her wedding  
15 a Methodist and came out of the church a Presbyterian; and

16 WHEREAS, she attended Fourth Ward, Central School, and Lake Charles High  
17 School, especially loving her high school experience, particularly the Kilties and her  
18 outstanding teachers, where she created lifelong friendships; and

1           WHEREAS, Cissie attended Louisiana State University where she thrived, being  
2           elected to serve as president of Mortar Board and realizing her passion for LSU football,  
3           particularly as a senior in 1958 when the Tigers won their first national football title; she  
4           enthusiastically attended the 2020 national championship game with her childhood friend  
5           and LSU roommate, Angell Stockwell Wright, which was a highlight of her life; and

6           WHEREAS, while at LSU, Cissie joined Chi Omega, the sorority she dearly loved,  
7           because of her passion for the cardinal and straw, her adult nickname was "Big Mama Owl",  
8           and was delighted when her daughter, Ruth, joined the sorority, even though it was at the  
9           University of Alabama; and

10          WHEREAS, as a young woman, she taught seventh grade English at Central School  
11          where her students were impacted by her infectious zest for life and remember her to this  
12          day; and

13          WHEREAS, Cissie was recognized by the Junior League of Lake Charles as  
14          Sustainer of the Year for her service to the community, and new Junior League members  
15          were inspired by hearing her own brand of the history of Lake Charles; and

16          WHEREAS, Cissie volunteered with her daughters' schools including Oak Park  
17          Elementary, ICCS, and St. Louis, from fundraising for air conditioners for Oak Park in the  
18          70s, to coordinating the Harvest Festival and being the Blues Mom at St. Louis in the 80s;  
19          she found ways to make a positive impact wherever she was involved; long after her  
20          daughters were no longer in school, Cissie was still loving children through her  
21          volunteerism; and, through her church, First Presbyterian, she was still volunteering as a  
22          lunch buddy and tutor with students at Oak Park until recently; and

23          WHEREAS, Cissie was married to William L. "Bill" McLeod Jr. who served in the  
24          Louisiana Legislature for twenty-three years: the House of Representatives representing  
25          Calcasieu and Cameron parishes from 1968 to 1976 and then the state Senate representing  
26          District 27 consisting of Calcasieu and Jeff Davis parishes for fifteen years, rising to the  
27          chairmanship of the Senate Retirement Committee and dean of the Southwest Louisiana  
28          delegation; a member of the reform-minded legislators elected in 1968 called the "Young  
29          Turks", he supported and sponsored numerous changes in state government that continue to  
30          benefit Louisiana today, and as a senator and committee chairman, his leadership and

1 independence earned him the respect and admiration of his Senate colleagues; he was the  
2 pioneer of the "personal legislative visit" with voters for twenty years; prior to legislative  
3 sessions, he would set up a card table and folding chairs outside of grocery stores throughout  
4 his district to allow constituents to have a one-on-one forum to provide their input on issues  
5 of the day; and

6 WHEREAS, Cissie brought many strengths to her role as a political wife, not the  
7 least of which was her excellent memory for names, relationships, and people's stories; some  
8 people thought she knew everyone and their family trees in Lake Charles, even the entire  
9 state; she was a natural politician and knew how to mobilize others to get things done; she  
10 was once described as the politician behind the statesman; and

11 WHEREAS, one of her favorite experiences was reigning as Queen Anna XLI of the  
12 Krewe of Mystique where she had a grand time celebrating as only Cissie knew how with  
13 her family and many friends; and

14 WHEREAS, Cissie and Bill dearly loved their camp at Big Lake, "Cissie By the  
15 Sea", where she enjoyed spending many happy days, especially with her grandchildren at  
16 "Camp Mimi"; and

17 WHEREAS, while Cissie had many health challenges in her life, she never let these  
18 difficulties slow her down, keep her from caring for others, or hinder her from enjoying the  
19 wonderful foods of Southwest Louisiana beyond doctors' orders; and

20 WHEREAS, Cissie was preceded in death by her parents, Carroll and Floy Nelson  
21 Allen; her brother Kently Qualls; and her husband, The Honorable William Lasater McLeod  
22 Jr.; and

23 WHEREAS, she is survived by three adoring daughters Sara Nelson McLeod Judson  
24 (Mark), Martha Ellen McLeod Livanec (Scott), and Ruth McLeod Rohs (Stephen); and  
25 grandchildren Rachel McLeod Judson, Marie Louise Livanec, William McLeod Livanec,  
26 Caroline Isabel Livanec, William McLeod Rohs, and Katherine Elizabeth Rohs; and

27 WHEREAS, Cissie McLeod was a great lady who will be sorely missed by her  
28 community and state and will always be remembered for her love of family, many passions  
29 in life; and her accomplishments resulted in a most fascinating and distinguished life.

30 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana

1 does hereby extend heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of Marilyn "Cissie"  
2 Qualls McLeod, wife, mother, community leader, and volunteer who set an extraordinary  
3 standard of graciousness and good citizenship for all to emulate.

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to her  
5 three daughters Sara Nelson McLeod Judson, Martha Ellen McLeod Livanec, and  
6 Ruth McLeod Rohs.

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The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part  
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Jerry J. Guillot.

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DIGEST

SR 36 Original

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Johns

Expresses condolences upon the death of Lady Marilyn "Cissie" Qualls McLeod.