

2021 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 83

BY REPRESENTATIVE HUGHES

A RESOLUTION

To express the condolences of the House of Representatives upon the death of Norma Jane "NJ" Sabiston.

WHEREAS, it is with immense sadness and profound regret that the House of Representatives has learned of the untimely death, on December 4, 2020, of Norma Jane Sabiston; and

WHEREAS, Norma Jane was born on July 20, 1955, to Norma Lyttle and Walter "Spec" Sabiston; she graduated from Marion Abramson Senior High School, where she befriended the future United States Senator, Mary Landrieu; after high school, she attended the University of New Orleans, majoring in political science; and

WHEREAS, Norma Jane learned the value of public service as a young woman observing her mother who served as an assistant to New Orleans City Councilman Mike Early; she would often visit Councilman Early's office after school and watch he and her mother work to help New Orleans citizens overcome a variety of issues; and

WHEREAS, NJ was incredibly active in various capacities throughout her professional life; she served on many boards, working to achieve solutions related to climate change, racial equity, youth leadership, and education; and

WHEREAS, Norma Jane was one of the first women in Louisiana to achieve a great deal of political influence in the traditionally male-dominated field of politics; she has been an inspiration for young women across Louisiana and the United States who hope to engage in a career in politics; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Sabiston was relentlessly enthusiastic and positive; she truly believed anything was achievable through effort, teamwork, and determination; she was

always professional and cordial in her work relationships, and she was respected and well liked by her political opponents, despite being active during a period of significant political rancor and partisan division; and

WHEREAS, NJ possessed a knack for motivating her colleagues to join her in her quest to achieve the countless ideals and goals she set for herself and her team each morning; and

WHEREAS, NJ worked with the Audubon Commission, the Louisiana Youth Seminar, the *E Pluribus Unum* Institute and Fund, the UNO Alumni Association, the New Orleans Recreation Development Foundation, and many other commissions and foundations; and

WHEREAS, NJ was a widely sought after political advisor to prominent politicians in the state and country; she served on the staffs of Congressman Billy Tauzin and Senator John Breaux, and she helped engineer the historic election of Mary Landrieu as the first woman to represent Louisiana in the United States Senate; after that monumental achievement, she served on former Senator Landrieu's staff for fifteen years; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Sabiston's work for Senator Landrieu and the congressional delegation helped secure billions of dollars in relief funding after the devastation of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita; and

WHEREAS, although NJ served as a trusted advisor to presidents, senators, congressmen, governors, and mayors, she often remarked that her most important work was serving as a mentor to hundreds of young leaders; and

WHEREAS, Norma Jane Sabiston is survived by her mother, Norma Lyttle Sabiston; her sisters, Dottie Grace Belletto, Anita Pollack, and Donna Linares, and her husband Ed; her brother, Walter E. "Sonny" Sabiston, III; and her nieces and nephews and countless friends and colleagues; and

WHEREAS, NJ always put Louisiana first and always worked across party lines to help move the state towards progress; she was infinitely more concerned with successfully completing her objectives than receiving credit for her work; she believed that you should leave things better than you found them, and she accomplished this by working tirelessly to make Louisiana better and by nurturing the many relationships she made throughout her career; she will be deeply missed, but her legacy will live on forever.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express heartfelt condolences on the death of Norma Jane Sabiston; does hereby record for posterity Ms. Sabiston's incredible work serving both the state and country; does hereby recognize the tremendous positive impact that her work has had on the state of Louisiana and its citizens; and does hereby extend sincere hopes and wishes that her family, friends, and loved ones find comfort during this difficult time.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the family of Norma Jane Sabiston.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES