

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 16

BY SENATOR ALLAIN

A RESOLUTION

To express the sincere condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the death of St. Mary Parish Sheriff Blaise Smith.

WHEREAS, it is with solemn regret and heartfelt sorrow that the citizens of St. Mary Parish learned of the loss of St. Mary Parish Sheriff Blaise W. Smith; and

WHEREAS, Sheriff Blaise Smith passed away in the afternoon hours of Saturday, February 24, 2024, at the age of seventy-five, surrounded by the love of his family and friends at The Carpenter House of St. Joseph Hospice in Lafayette after bravely facing a prolonged illness; and

WHEREAS, Blaise was born into the military family of Bert and Mae Smith on December 7, 1948, in San Diego, California; and

WHEREAS, a distinguished veteran of the United States Army, he bravely served in combat in the Vietnam War; and

WHEREAS, transitioning from military service, he embarked on a lifelong commitment to law enforcement, dedicating over five decades serving with numerous agencies ultimately culminating in his tenure as Sheriff of St. Mary Parish from 2018 until his passing; and

WHEREAS, renowned for his accessible demeanor and unwavering commitment to enhancing community safety, Sheriff Smith prioritized the well-being of his fellow law enforcement officers; and

WHEREAS, truly a man with a servant's heart, Sheriff Smith exemplified the meaning of dedication, integrity, faithfulness, compassion, and honesty; and

WHEREAS, despite his larger-than-life personality, Sheriff Smith retained humility, never losing sight of his roots or the individuals who supported him throughout his journey; and

WHEREAS, Sheriff Smith held a priceless collection of stories, masterfully recounted in a way that captivated listeners, evoking laughter and tears alike; and

WHEREAS, alongside his dedication to law enforcement, Sheriff Smith remained steadfast in his Christian faith, exemplifying the principles of service and compassion by extending Christ's love to all those he encountered, embodying the essence of selfless devotion and neighborly affection; and

WHEREAS, Sheriff Smith led countless church services to bring the word of God to others, preached at an unknown number of funerals for those he knew as well as those he did not; and

WHEREAS, Sheriff Smith offered his support to individuals navigating various trials and tribulations, tirelessly striving to convey God's love, solace, and tranquility to those in need; and

WHEREAS, a 32nd degree Mason, Sheriff Smith was a member of the Franklin Masonic F. & A. M. Lodge 57 as well as the Breaux Bridge Lodge 746; he was a three-time past Master, served as secretary for 23 years, and served two consecutive years as Chaplain for the 11th Masonic District; and

WHEREAS, though Sheriff Smith was a man of many hats, one of his favorites was definitely the red and white hat he wore as one of Santa's helpers along with his wife Karen who gave Mrs. Clause a helping hand; and

WHEREAS, when the Christmas season rolled around, the twinkling in his eyes grew bigger and bigger, and whether he was riding in a parade or simply sitting on the bayou side at Franklin's Christmas on the Bayou light display, the joy Sheriff Smith brought to innumerable children and adults was evident and truly mutual; and

WHEREAS, Sheriff Smith leaves behind to cherish his memory his wife of twenty-two years, Karen McGoff Smith; his three children, Brent W. Smith and his companion Bethany Sonnier, Bridget Smith Buck and her husband Dr. John Buck, and Keely Jean Smith and her fiancé Cornelius Johnson; his three bonus children, Tava Deslatte Robichaux, Tandra Deslatte Hebert and her husband John, and Larry "Teddy" Deslatte III and his wife Celeste; nineteen grandchildren, Braylon, Gavyn, Avery, Addison, Keelyn, Natalie, Isaiah, Blaise, Brendon, Briana, Rebekah, Austin, MaKaila, Johnaé, Ryan, Caleb, Grace, Collin, and Madelyn; great-grandchildren, Rylee, Foster, Ivy, Blake, Noah, Austin Jr., Rosélyn, Kinley, Karsyn, Londyn, and Delilah; his sister, Patty Smith May; his brother-in-law, Richard

McGoff and his wife Mary Lynn; his sister-in-law, Lea Salvador and her husband Neil; his brother in Christ, Ronald C. Williams and his wife Judy; his Army brother, Ted Horsman and his wife Jeannie; as well as a host of nieces, nephews, extended family, and friends; and

WHEREAS, Sheriff Smith is preceded in death by his parents, Bert W. Smith and Mae Thieme Smith; his two brothers, Orlin David Smith and Scott Lawrence Smith; his mother-in-law, Claire Giroir McGoff; his brothers-in-law, Robert McGoff, Raymond McGoff, and Davey May; and his infant granddaughter, Kailyn Elizabeth Hebert.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express sincere and heartfelt condolences on the death of St. Mary Parish Sheriff Blaise Smith.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Karen McGoff Smith.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE