

2025 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 78

BY SENATOR FOIL

CONDOLENCES. Expresses sincere and heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of Harry Heil Roberts, PhD, on the occasion of his passing.

A RESOLUTION

To express the sincere condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the passing of Dr. Harry Heil Roberts, Boyd Professor Emeritus of Louisiana State University, and to recognize his distinguished contributions to the fields of marine geology and oceanography, as well as his lasting impact on higher education and scientific advancement in the state of Louisiana and beyond.

WHEREAS, it is with deep regret and profound respect that the Senate has learned of the passing of Dr. Harry Heil Roberts, PhD, on March 26, 2025, at the age of eighty-five; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Roberts was born on February 2, 1940, in Huntington, West Virginia, and raised in Milton, where he excelled both academically and athletically, graduating from Milton High School in 1958 and earning his Bachelor of Science in Physics from Marshall University in 1963, where he also played point guard for the Thundering Herd basketball team; and

WHEREAS, he continued his academic pursuits at Louisiana State University, where he earned his Master of Science in Geology in 1966 and his PhD in Geology in 1969, thus beginning a remarkable career spanning over five decades in marine geology and oceanography; and

1 WHEREAS, Dr. Roberts dedicated his professional life to Louisiana State
2 University's Coastal Studies Institute, rising from instructor to director and ultimately
3 earning the university's highest academic honor when he was named a Boyd Professor in
4 2001 and Boyd Professor Emeritus in 2006; and

5 WHEREAS, he made groundbreaking contributions to the scientific understanding
6 of the Gulf of Mexico, including the discovery and direct observation of frozen methane
7 hydrates, the mapping of the seafloor, and research into deltaic dynamics, sedimentation, and
8 coastal sustainability; and

9 WHEREAS, his prolific scholarly output includes over 200 peer-reviewed
10 publications and numerous professional honors, including the prestigious Shephard's Medal
11 in 2003 for sustained excellence in marine geology, as well as fellowships from the
12 Geological Society of America, the American Association for the Advancement of Science,
13 and the National Science Foundation; and

14 WHEREAS, Dr. Roberts received numerous additional accolades throughout his
15 career, including the Doris Malkin Curtis Medal, the Grover Murray Best Published Paper
16 Award, the Distinguished Research Master Award, and the Joe and Richard Lipsey
17 Professional Educators Award, among others; and

18 WHEREAS, he also served as an editor for major scientific journals, mentored
19 generations of marine geologists, and earned the admiration of colleagues and students alike
20 for his dedication, insight, and generous spirit; and

21 WHEREAS, beyond his professional accomplishments, Dr. Roberts was a devoted
22 family man who lovingly supported his son, Andrew Roberts, M.D., and daughter-in-law,
23 Maryna Roberts, and was a tireless caretaker to his late wife, Mary Sue Roberts; and

24 WHEREAS, Dr. Roberts will be remembered not only for his transformative
25 scientific work, but also for his kindness, humility, deep curiosity, and the selfless generosity
26 with which he served his family, students, and community.

27 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana
28 does hereby express its deepest condolences upon the passing of Dr. Harry Heil Roberts,
29 commends his legacy of academic excellence and scientific discovery, and recognizes the
30 profound impact of his life's work on the state of Louisiana, the nation, and the world.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Senate Legislative Services. The keyword, summary, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

	DIGEST	
SR 78 Original	2025 Regular Session	Foil

Expresses condolences to the family and friends of Harry Heil Roberts, PhD upon the occasion of his passing.