

Regular Session, 2013

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 226

BY REPRESENTATIVES GAINES, ABRAMSON, ARNOLD, WESLEY BISHOP,
BROSSETT, AND LEGER

A RESOLUTION

To express the condolences of the House of Representatives upon the death of the Honorable
Dr. Elliot Cornelius Willard, Sr., of New Orleans.

WHEREAS, it is with deep regret and profound sadness that the Louisiana House of
Representatives has learned of the death of Elliot Cornelius Willard of New Orleans on
December 24, 2012, after a courageous battle against cancer; and

WHEREAS, born in New Orleans, Elliot Cornelius Willard was the second child of
Maude Washington and Julius Walter Willard, Sr., the grandson of Rev. J. Walter Willard
and Adelpia Willard, and Mr. and Mrs. Bartley Washington; and

WHEREAS, Elliot grew up in a strong Catholic family that attended mass regularly
and he was an altar server so frequently that he earned the nickname "Altar Boy"; and

WHEREAS, Elliot received his primary education at Holy Ghost Elementary and
secondary education at Xavier Preparatory High School, where he excelled in both football
and track, breaking the city-wide record in the 100-yard dash and holding other top track
records in Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, his athletic ability, Catholic upbringing, and academic excellence
helped him receive a full scholarship to Xavier University in New Orleans, from which he
received his bachelor's degree in physical education and his master's in guidance counseling;
Elliot later began his doctoral degree at Grambling State University and studied at Tulane
University; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Willard was a faculty member at Dillard University and Loyola
University and received an Honorary Doctorate in education from the University of Illinois;
and

WHEREAS, in 1952, Elliot married the love of his life, Mary Jane Jordan, and their
union was blessed with twelve children, six boys and six girls, including former state

senator, the Honorable Cynthia Willard-Lewis and the Honorable Judge Benedict Willard; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Willard had a long and successful career as an educator and public administrator, including stints as assistant superintendent with the Louisiana Department of Education under Governor Edwin Edwards; as a teacher at Xavier Prep, where he also coached football, baseball, and track, St. Augustine High School, Joseph S. Clark, and Booker T. Washington High School; as an executive administrator in the office of New Orleans District Attorneys Harry C. Connick, Sr., and Eddie Jordan; and as a two-term member of the Orleans Parish School Board; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Willard was the first lay principal of St. Augustine High School where he pursued a mission of imparting knowledge, developing minds, and molding the character of the thousands of young men who were his students; and

WHEREAS, in 1977, Mr. Willard was named principal at Booker T. Washington, and during his tenure he purchased band uniforms, implemented one of the first career days in the Orleans Parish School System, and helped the Lions win several district championships in football; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Willard was a member of many professional and social organizations, including Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Knights of Peter Claver, Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Executive Board of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Urban League, City Park Board of Directors, the Martin Luther King, Jr., parade committee, and the Allstate Sugar Bowl committee; and

WHEREAS, with the death of Elliot Cornelius Willard, Louisiana has lost one of her finest sons, and he leaves behind a rich and unique legacy of tenacity, determination, integrity, professionalism, and strength; and

WHEREAS, the death of Mr. Willard has left an abiding void in the many lives he touched throughout his life, and his memory shall remain eternal in the hearts and minds of all those who knew and loved him.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express its sincere sorrow and heartfelt condolences upon the death of the Honorable Elliot Cornelius Willard of New Orleans, does hereby recognize his extraordinary faith and many years of service to his family, the Orleans Parish

Public School System, the entire New Orleans community, and the state of Louisiana, does hereby record for posterity his tremendous gifts and love for his students, his outstanding abilities as an instructor and administrator and his generosity and kindness, does hereby extend appreciation for his enduring legacy that will continue to be a source of great pride, inspiration, and honor for his family and friends, his community, and the state of Louisiana, and does hereby express the deep regret of the entire state upon the loss of this magnificent man.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the family of Dr. Elliot Cornelius Willard, Sr.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES