

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 175

BY SENATORS ALARIO, ADLEY, ALLAIN, AMEDEE, APPEL, BROOME, BROWN, BUFFINGTON, CHABERT, CLAITOR, CORTEZ, CROWE, DONAHUE, DORSEY-COLOMB, ERDEY, GALLOT, GUILLORY, HEITMEIER, JOHNS, KOSTELKA, LAFLEUR, LONG, MARTINY, MILLS, MORRELL, MORRISH, MURRAY, NEVERS, PEACOCK, PERRY, PETERSON, RISER, GARY SMITH, JOHN SMITH, TARVER, THOMPSON, WALSWORTH, WARD AND WHITE AND REPRESENTATIVES ABRAMSON, ADAMS, ANDERS, ARMES, ARNOLD, BADON, BARRAS, BARROW, BERTHELOT, BILLIOT, STUART BISHOP, WESLEY BISHOP, BROADWATER, BROWN, BURFORD, HENRY BURNS, TIM BURNS, BURRELL, CARMODY, CARTER, CHAMPAGNE, CHANEY, CONNICK, COX, CROMER, DANAHAY, DIXON, DOVE, EDWARDS, FANNIN, FOIL, FRANKLIN, GAINES, GAROFALO, GEYMANN, GISCLAIR, GREENE, GUILLORY, GUINN, HARRIS, HARRISON, HAVARD, HAZEL, HENRY, HENSGENS, HILL, HODGES, HOFFMANN, HOLLIS, HONORE, HOWARD, HUNTER, HUVAL, IVEY, KATRINA JACKSON, JAMES, JEFFERSON, JOHNSON, JONES, KLECKLEY, LAMBERT, NANCY LANDRY, TERRY LANDRY, LEBAS, LEGER, LEOPOLD, LOPINTO, LORUSSO, MACK, MILLER, MONToucET, MORENO, JAY MORRIS, JIM MORRIS, NORTON, ORTEGO, PEARSON, PIERRE, PONTI, POPE, PRICE, PUGH, PYLANT, REYNOLDS, RICHARD, RITCHIE, ROBIDEAUX, SCHEXNAYDER, SCHRODER, SEABAUGH, SHADOIN, SIMON, SMITH, ST. GERMAIN, STOKES, TALBOT, THIBAUT, THIERRY, THOMPSON, WHITNEY, ALFRED WILLIAMS, PATRICK WILLIAMS, WILLMOTT AND WOODRUFF

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To express the sincere and heartfelt condolences of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the passing of John Maginnis, legendary Louisiana political journalist, publisher, and author.

WHEREAS, it is with deep regret and profound sadness that the Legislature of Louisiana has learned of the death of John Maginnis on Sunday, May 25, 2014, at the age of sixty-six; and

WHEREAS, born on March 17, 1948, John was a newsman from the very start, delivering *The State-Times* on his bike after school, and attended Sacred Heart Catholic School and Catholic High School Baton Rouge, where he began his writing career with a regular column in the high school newsletter; and

WHEREAS, at Louisiana State University, John was editor of *The Daily Reveille*, in which he published a daily column, and he was inducted in 2000 into the Hall of Fame

of the LSU Manship School of Mass Communication; and

WHEREAS, following his graduation from college and service in the United States Navy, John returned to Baton Rouge in 1972, which marked Edwin Edwards' first term as governor, and John's thoughts were, "Why leave Louisiana? Great Place. Good story"; forty-two years later, upon John's death, Governor Edwards noted that John "played an important role in monitoring the affairs of our state and always called it as he saw it"; and

WHEREAS, it was in 1972 when John entered the realm of Louisiana political journalism with the publication of *Gris Gris* magazine, and he continued carving out his role as the state's foremost figure in this arena with the *Louisiana Political Review*, which evolved in the 1990s into *The Fax Weekly*, was shortly thereafter renamed *LaPolitics Weekly*, and is now published by twenty-one media outlets around the state; and

WHEREAS, John was a mentor to younger journalists, and in recent years, he expanded his extremely popular and influential column and its digital counterpart, LaPolitics.com, by adding new staff, developing media partnerships, and broadening its editorial scope; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his achievements as a publisher and journalist, John authored three books about Louisiana politics, *The Last Hayride*, *Cross to Bear*, and *The Politics of Reform*, all of which helped make his name synonymous with Louisiana politics; and

WHEREAS, because of his genuine warmth, likeable demeanor, and unwavering fairness, people liked and trusted John, and he cultivated sources throughout state government; he did not take sides or use his notebook as a pulpit for any one agenda over another, as his passion was not partisanship but politics and, of course, Louisiana's colorful political personalities; and

WHEREAS, United States Representative Steve Scalise noted John's "unique talent for telling a story in a way that made it come to life for his readers"; his columns truly needed no byline, as he had a way with words that was his own; he conveyed news, but it was news informed by his signature analysis, insights, and comedic touch, and his writings had a depth and breadth that made his work invaluable to his readers and a fundamental part of the historical record of politics in this state; and

WHEREAS, though widely respected, admired, and regarded as the gold standard in his field, John remained soft spoken and humble; while he often responded to compliments of his work by saying, "I owe it all to the material", the citizens of Louisiana know that we owe much of our political knowledge to John; his influence extended far beyond the borders of this state, as he was a featured speaker for civic groups and other organizations across the Gulf Coast, and when national journalists needed a source on Louisiana politics, John was the "go-to" person because for the better part of half a century, there has simply been no one more identified with Louisiana political journalism than John Maginnis; and

WHEREAS, John's career spanned the terms of five governors, including Governor Bobby Jindal, who stated upon John's passing, "It's safe to say he is the historian on Louisiana politics"; and

WHEREAS, United States Senator Mary Landrieu also paid tribute to John when commenting, "Louisiana has lost its premier political commentator ... John was largely responsible for making politics Louisiana's second-favorite pastime, just after football"; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his highly significant professional contributions, John was a vibrant example of one who enthusiastically embraced the priorities of a life fully lived, especially through his dedication to his wife and extended family; and

WHEREAS, John married late in life when he found the very special Jackie Drinkwater, and they made their home in Baton Rouge while spending many weekends in New Orleans, a city that was close to his heart; and

WHEREAS, known both for his strong work ethic and his gregarious personality, John balanced his professional responsibilities during the work week with his attendance at social gatherings, and weekends found him unwinding in the Crescent City with his beloved Jackie, relaxing at their condominium and strolling through the French Quarter; and

WHEREAS, with his brilliant mind, his keen sense of humor, his genuinely kind heart, and the twinkle in his eye, John Maginnis represented all that is good about this state; the very embodiment of *joie de vivre*, he loved Louisiana, loved life, and most of all, loved his family, including Jackie, his brother, Michael John Maginnis, his sisters, Renee Maginnis Dole and Kathleen Maginnis Bierman, his nieces and nephews, who will deeply miss "Uncle

Johnny", and his cousins and other relatives, all of whom will cherish memories of times spent with John and of the love and laughter he brought to their lives; and

WHEREAS, though John's death leaves a tremendous void in this state and what Governor Kathleen Babineaux Blanco describes as "a great hole at the Capitol", where he was a constant fixture and an institution unto himself, he will always be highly regarded for earning the trust and admiration of the state's lawmakers and respected for his integrity by those who walk these halls; and

WHEREAS, it is only appropriate to take proper notice of the singular accomplishments of John Maginnis and to express the immense pride of the people of this state in this wonderful gentleman who will be immeasurably missed but certainly never forgotten.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express sincere and heartfelt condolences upon the death of John Maginnis, legendary Louisiana journalist, publisher, and author, does hereby recognize that his legacy of excellence and professionalism shall forever endure, and does hereby record for posterity the abiding appreciation of the citizens of Louisiana for his extraordinary contributions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to John's wife, Jackie Drinkwater-Maginnis.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES