

2015 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 156

BY REPRESENTATIVE ROBERT JOHNSON

A RESOLUTION

To express the condolences of the House of Representatives upon the death of retired police chief Mary Fanara of Bunkie.

WHEREAS, the House of Representatives was saddened to learn of the departure from this life on June 2, 2015, of retired police chief Mary Fanara, of Bunkie, at the age of fifty-eight; and

WHEREAS, born in Bunkie on December 25, 1956, to Tony and Virginia Lipoma, in 1977 Mary Lipoma Fanara became the first woman hired to serve on the force of the Bunkie Police Department; at the age of twenty, she began her career as a dispatcher; and

WHEREAS, Mary Fanara graduated from the Alexandria Police Academy and began work as a patrol officer; in 1983, Mary Fanara shot a perfect score, becoming the first person in the history of the Bunkie Police Department to do so; and

WHEREAS, she remained with the Bunkie Police Department until her successful run in 1990 for the office of city marshal of Ward 10; Ms. Fanara was the first female city marshal and served until 1994; and

WHEREAS, in 1994, Ms. Fanara ran for the office of chief of police, a race that she lost by two votes; Ms. Fanara filed a lawsuit challenging the election results, and after a new election was held, she became the first woman elected police chief in Avoyelles Parish, serving as chief of police until 1998; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Fanara worked as a detective in the Avoyelles Parish Sheriff's Department in 1998 until she again won the position of chief of police in 2002 and served three consecutive terms; and

WHEREAS, retired Chief Fanara worked tirelessly to develop and modernize the Bunkie Police Department; the police headquarters was relocated from its original location on West Oak Street under her leadership to a more visible building on Main Street; and

WHEREAS, mobile cameras, body cameras, tasers, and continuing education courses for officers were secured for the Bunkie Police Department with funds from grants applied for under Chief Fanara's administration; and

WHEREAS, Chief Fanara served four terms and sixteen years as an elected chief of police; altogether, she was in law enforcement for thirty-seven years, retiring in June 2014; and

WHEREAS, during her law enforcement career, Mary Fanara served on the Louisiana Chiefs of Police Association, the Louisiana Crime Victims Reparations Board, the Medication Assistance for the Needy Board, the Louisiana Emergency Preparedness Board, the Bunkie Rotary Club, and was a member of St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church; and

WHEREAS, fond recollections of good times with Mary Lipoma Fanara will forever remain in the hearts and minds of those who knew and loved her best: her fiancé, Glen Gremillion; son Philip Fanara and wife Xuening Bai; sisters Virginia and Carmel Lipoma; her brother Anthony Lipoma and wife Maryann, and brother Mike Lipoma; and her nieces and nephews; and

WHEREAS, retired police chief Mary Fanara was held in high esteem by local and state police officers who trained under her, and she will be greatly missed by the residents of Avoyelles Parish.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby extend sincerest condolences to the family, friends, and former employees of retired police chief Mary Fanara and does hereby offer best hopes and prayers for comfort to those who mourn her passing.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the family of Mary Fanara.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES