

2020 First Extraordinary Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 65

BY REPRESENTATIVES GARY CARTER, MARINO, FREEMAN, HILFERTY, LYONS,
GREEN, NEWELL, STAGNI, WILLARD, DUPLESSIS, THOMAS, VILLIO,
ILLG, KERNER, AND CORMIER

A RESOLUTION

To express the condolences of the House of Representatives upon the death of Blaine S. Kern.

WHEREAS, the members of the House of Representatives were saddened to learn of the death on June 25, 2020, of Blaine S. Kern, at the age of ninety-three; and

WHEREAS, Blaine Kern was born in Algiers on May 17, 1927; in 1932, as an apprentice to his father, Roy, Blaine painted his first Mardi Gras float; in the second decade of his life, Blaine helped Roy paint signs; he also worked on tugboats and shrimp boats; and

WHEREAS, Blaine Kern answered the call of duty to his country at the age of eighteen and served a year in the military in Korea; upon his return, Blaine painted a mural in a hospital, and Dr. Henry LaRocca, captain of the Krewe of Alla, contracted Blaine to design, build, and paint floats for the krewe; that was the start of Blaine's fame as a Mardi Gras float maker and the founding of his business, Blaine Kern Artists; and

WHEREAS, Blaine traveled to France, Spain, and Italy to hone his craft by studying with the world's leading float and costume makers; he was inspired by the European style of float making but was endowed with significant creative gifts of his own; Blaine Kern invented the double deck float, multiple unit floats, and animated floats; and

WHEREAS, in 1984, Blaine created and opened Mardi Gras World as a tourist attraction; the attraction annually draws more than one hundred fifty thousand visitors from around the world and has created thousands of jobs in the city of New Orleans; his creations for the 1984 World's Fair included its entrance, the Wonderwall, and the gondola; and

WHEREAS, the evolution of New Orleans' Mardi Gras is attributed to Blaine Kern, and his contributions to the event have been acknowledged by the state of Louisiana and the city of New Orleans; Blaine Kern was known as "Mr. Mardi Gras", and his legacy will be celebrated in New Orleans at Mardi Gras parades for years to come.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express deepest sympathies to the family and friends of Blaine S. Kern upon his death; does hereby recognize his extraordinary artistic talent and creative influence upon the New Orleans Mardi Gras scene and upon Mardi Gras parades around the world; and does hereby offer hopes for comfort and peace to those who mourn.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the family of Blaine S. Kern.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES