

2019 Regular Session

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 141

BY SENATORS MORRELL, APPEL, BISHOP, CARTER, HEWITT AND PETERSON  
AND REPRESENTATIVES ABRAMSON, BAGNERIS, BOUIE,  
DUPLESSIS, GAROFALO, JIMMY HARRIS, HILFERTY AND  
LEGER

CONDOLENCES. Expresses condolences on the death of Leah Chase, the Queen of Creole Cuisine.

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To express the sincere condolences of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the death of Leah  
3 Chase, the "Queen of Creole Cuisine".

4 WHEREAS, it is with deep regret and profound sorrow that the citizens of Louisiana  
5 learned of the death of beloved New Orleans chef, Leah Chase, while surrounded by her  
6 family, on June 1, 2019, at the age of ninety-six; and

7 WHEREAS, Leah L. Chase, born on January 6, 1923, in Madisonville, Louisiana,  
8 moved to New Orleans to finish high school and became the world renown matriarch of  
9 Creole cuisine; and

10 WHEREAS, the Chase family stated that their matriarch, Leah Chase's, "Daily joy  
11 was not simply cooking, but preparing meals to bring people together"; and

12 WHEREAS, Leah Chase saw her role and cooking in life, as a vehicle for social  
13 change during a difficult time in our country's history, she is known for practicing what she  
14 preached; and

15 WHEREAS, Leah Chase became the executive chef and co-owner of the historic and  
16 legendary Dooky Chase's Restaurant with her husband, local jazz trumpeter Edgar "Dooky"  
17 Chase Jr., in 1946; and

18 WHEREAS, the Dooky Chase Restaurant, an elegant sit-down Creole restaurant and

1 African-American art gallery, quickly became known as a safe haven for civil rights leaders,  
2 activists, politicians, and African-American musicians and entertainers, some of whom could  
3 not eat in New Orleans restaurants during the Jim Crow era; and

4 WHEREAS, Dooky Chase, located in segregated New Orleans, was also a gathering  
5 place where whites and blacks ate together all the time while mapping strategy during the  
6 civil rights movement; and

7 WHEREAS, Leah Chase's meals that reflected the city's Creole heritage, Spanish,  
8 French, and African culinary influences, fed many of New Orleans citizens; the famous, such  
9 as Presidents Barack Obama and George W. Bush, Martin Luther King Jr., Jesse Jackson,  
10 Thurgood Marshall, Quincy Jones, Duke Ellington, Ray Charles, Nat King Cole, Lena  
11 Horne, Count Basie, James Baldwin, Sarah Vaughan, and those on the front lines of the  
12 struggle for human dignity, such as the Freedom Riders and the Amistad Research Center;  
13 and

14 WHEREAS, Leah Chase, a strong, selfless matriarch, and extraordinary woman of  
15 faith was often heard saying how much she treasured all of her customers and was honored  
16 to have the privilege to meet and serve them; and

17 WHEREAS, Leah Chase's talent and contributions received scores of accolades  
18 including the Lifetime Achievement Award from the James Beard Foundation, the  
19 Times-Picayune Loving Cup, the Louisiana Restaurant Association named her its  
20 Restaurateur of the Year in 2009; honorary degrees from Tulane, Loyola, Dillard, and  
21 Johnson & Wales universities; Our Lady of Holy Cross College, Madonna College, and  
22 Xavier University, which gave her their highest honor, the Francis Anthony Drexel Medal;  
23 the Southern Food and Beverage Museum named a gallery for her and she received awards  
24 from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and a host of other  
25 awards; and

26 WHEREAS, in addition to helping to mend a divided country one meal at a time,  
27 Leah Chase continued to give by sharing her cooking secrets in the following cookbooks:  
28 *The Dooky Chase Cookbook, And Still I Cook* and *Down Home Healthy: Family Recipes of*  
29 *Black American Chefs* while often teaching at Chef John Folse's classes at Nicholls State  
30 University; and

