SLS 18RS-3286 ORIGINAL

2018 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 158

BY SENATOR MILLS

CONDOLENCES. Expresses sincere and heartfelt condolences upon the death of Wade Joseph Watkins.

1	A RESOLUTION
2	To express the sincere condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the
3	death of Wade Joseph Watkins.
4	WHEREAS, it is with deep regret and profound sorrow that the citizens of Louisiana
5	and the members of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana have learned of the passing
6	of Wade Joseph Watkins, on January 28, 2018, at age ninety; and
7	WHEREAS, he was born in New Iberia, Louisiana, on July 2, 1927, and raised in St.
8	Martinville where he shared his life with his devoted wife, Kathryn, of sixty-three years and
9	where they raised their four children; and
10	WHEREAS, he retired from the United States Army after forty-two years of service
11	and was a veteran of World War II; and
12	WHEREAS, starting at a young age, Wade Watkins had a vast experience of life
13	roles including working in the cane, pepper and cotton fields with his uncles and relatives,
14	running a seafood market with his wife, working in construction, being a car salesman, and
15	working in the oilfield with Humble Oil; and
16	WHEREAS, he also worked for the United States Postal Service walking seven miles
17	a day as a mail carrier for over twenty years, served as Park Ranger and 4th of July
18	celebration coordinator, was a member and decorated medalist for the National Guard Rifle

1	Team at state and national levels, was coach and sponsor for the American Legion Junior
2	Rifle Team who became national winners, Army National Guard Recruiter, Sheriff's Deputy
3	for thirty-three years, operated the Auxiliary Police, served with Civil Defense, worked in
4	private security, and also operated a boat motor repair shop with his son for many years; and
5	WHEREAS, Wade Watkins pushed for the rights and protection of the elderly and
6	was a founder of the first TRIAD program in St. Martin Parish and in the nation; and
7	WHEREAS, he was also the driving force behind the Veteran's Memorial in St.
8	Martinville - a dream which he worked on tirelessly for over twelve years and accomplished;
9	and
10	WHEREAS, Wade Watkins once rode a double decker airplane with President Harry
11	Truman; and
12	WHEREAS, he was a decorated boxer in the United States Army in several classes;
13	he was called "Frenchie" when stationed in Germany because of his fluent French; he
14	actually lied about his age to join the United States Army and was sent home until he turned
15	seventeen; he then served in the European theatre of war, while his dad and uncles served
16	on the Pacific theatre; and
17	WHEREAS, Wade Watkins was injured by severe frost bite on his right hand and
18	ear when he ended up in a cave with his platoon for weeks, landing him in the hospital, but
19	not before discovering and recovering some of Hitler's treasures that were stolen from the
20	German's hidden deep inside the cave; and
21	WHEREAS, he was honored by the Woodman of the World and the Veterans of
22	Foreign Wars as well as Citizen of the Year in 2013 by the American Legion, and also
23	awarded as Citizen of the Year by the city of St. Martinville in 1973 for saving a man's life
24	- not being his first time to do so, or his last; and
25	WHEREAS, Wade Watkins was a devout Catholic who prayed the Rosary daily and
26	was a very faithful man who knew his God well; he was actively involved in his parish
27	church of St. Martin de Tours, serving as a Catholic Youth Group Leader, alongside Alvin
28	and Gerry Cormier and Wiltz and Pearl Bienvenue, mentoring many with time and patience
29	and leading by example and was proud to be thought of as an "Honorary Father and
30	Grandfather"; and he was a member of the Knights of Columbus, American Legion, VFW,

SLS 18RS-3286

and Honor Guards; and

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WHEREAS, he was known as "the man of 17 uniforms" because of his active involvement in his community and countless hours volunteering; and

WHEREAS, he was an avid hunter, and founder of the Big W Hunting Club; he loved to camp with his family, and enjoyed fishing with his son-in-law, Richard, and caregivers, Leah and John; and

WHEREAS, he brought strength and passion to his family, teaching them all about God and to give of yourself; he never sought recognition and was very humble in all he did; he was quick to pick up the pieces for all of his nieces, nephews, and cousins in their times of need; and he was the grandfather to all of their children at one time or another and was quick to become the "favorite uncle" because of his guidance and time he gave to all; he spent many years following his grandkids to the various activities they participated in and guided them all to the adults they are today by his example; and

WHEREAS, he had three girls he considered his "Wednesday's Child", Tricia Hammon, Billy Broussard Theriot, and Michelle Tauzin stepped up as the father figure to the girl he considered his surrogate daughter - Susan Broussard Douet, aka his "Suzie-Q"; and

WHEREAS, Wade Watkins was preceded in death by his wife, Kathryn Chastant Watkins; his parents Columbus and Rena Oubre Watkins; brothers-in-law, Warren, Raymond, Richard, and Norman Chastant; sisters-in-law, Loretta Chastant Prados, Juliette Chastant Lee, and Margaret Chastant Broussard; and

WHEREAS, he is survived by son, Kirk Watkins and wife, Jeannie; three daughters, Phyllis Watkins Castille and husband, John, Patty Watkins Boudreaux and husband, Scott, and Lori Watkins Hurst and husband, Richard; six grandchildren Sean Castille and wife Kristal, Clint Castille and partner Ashley Bouton, Jeremy Watkins and wife, Nicole, Amy Watkins, Jamie Watkins, and Christian Hurst; six great grandchildren, Hunter Bulliard, Hannah Guilbeau, Hugh Castille, Nicholas Watkins, Luke Watkins, and Easton Castille; sisters-in-law, Rose, Joyce, Shirley, and Jackie Chastant; his exchange student granddaughter, Klara Kall, of Sweden; and numerous nieces and nephews; and

WHEREAS, Wade touched many in the community; he was a loyal and trusted

SLS 18RS-3286 ORIGINAL
SR NO 158

friend and his compassion was as big as his heart; he was never afraid of hard work and long 1 2 hours; his faith in God came out in everything he did; his attitude and love of life was 3 contagious, he never met a stranger; and 4 WHEREAS, he was the most remarkable man and the toughest gentleman with a class act who was okay to call you out if you strayed away from God's way; and 5 6 WHEREAS, he will be dearly missed by all who had the privilege to know him, 7 particularly by his children who were proud to call him Dad and his grandchildren who were 8 proud to call him Paw Paw; and 9 WHEREAS, Wade Watkins missed his wife dearly and he was proud to call her his 10 wife, and finally they are back together; and 11 WHEREAS, the success of the state of Louisiana, the strength of our communities, 12 and the overall vitality of American society depend in great measure upon men like Wade 13 Joseph Watkins who led by example and made the world a better place for all future 14 generations, a true Louisiana hero, and an inspiration to all who were fortunate enough to 15 have known him. THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana 16 does hereby honor the life of Wade Joseph Watkins, an extraordinary man who shall forever 17 18 be remembered, and pay tribute to his remarkable legacy which will live long in the hearts of the many people whose lives he touched. 19 20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana 21 express sincere and heartfelt condolences to the family of Wade Joseph Watkins upon the occasion of his death. 22

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Jerry J. Guillot.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the

DIGEST SR 158 Original 2018 Regular Session

Mills

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family of Wade Joseph Watkins.

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