

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 35

BY SENATOR REESE

A RESOLUTION

To express the sincere condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the death of Shirley Mae Pearce Smith.

WHEREAS, it is with great regret and profound sorrow that the members of the Senate have learned of the passing of Shirley Mae Pearce Smith who died unexpectedly of a bacterial infection in New Orleans, Louisiana, on Friday, April 9, 2021, while visiting her family; and

WHEREAS, she was a native of Lake Charles, Louisiana, the daughter of Mabel and Hugh Pearce, and graduated from Lake Charles High School in 1962; and

WHEREAS, Shirley Smith also graduated from Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge where she met her future husband, S. Chris Smith III; and

WHEREAS, she and Chris lived briefly in New Orleans after college and then returned to his home in Leesville, Louisiana, where she established her family, taught English to generations of nonplussed ninth graders, and lived a robust life in a community she profoundly loved; and

WHEREAS, diagnosed with a rare cancer decades ago and given only a few months to live at the time, she persevered, and even thrived, spending the next thirty years traveling, working for local arts and civic groups, fostering personal relationships with her community, and following her intellectual curiosity to the sometimes random, but always fascinating, places it led her; and

WHEREAS, she was equally comfortable with an academic book, an old lawnmower, an esoteric piece of indigenous pottery, or an untamed flowerbed, and she cultivated distinct friendships with those who shared her varied interests; and

WHEREAS, to her family, she was a model of grace, acceptance, and maturity; and

WHEREAS, Shirley Smith was fulfilled in her Roman Catholic faith; its ritual, history, and dogma appealed to her cerebral nature, but more than that, she treasured the connection she felt with the Catholic body, and she devoted much of her talent and energy to its service; and

WHEREAS, she is survived by two very grateful sons, S. Christie Smith IV of Leesville, and E. Pearce Smith of New Orleans, and their wives, Dr. Christina Lord and Sushma Jasti Smith; as well as her two brothers, Hugh and John Pearce; and her brother-in-law George Ferguson Smith, all of whom she loved, respected, and chided unabashedly; and

WHEREAS, Shirley believed people should devote their charitable outlets towards local projects; and

WHEREAS, Shirley Mae Pearce Smith was a great lady who will be sorely missed by her community and state and will always be remembered for her love of family, many passions in life; and her accomplishments resulted in a most fascinating and distinguished life.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express sincere sympathies upon the loss of Shirley Mae Pearce Smith, wife, mother, community leader, and volunteer who set an extraordinary standard of graciousness and good citizenship for all to emulate, and does hereby extend heartfelt condolences to family, friends, and community upon her death.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the sons of Shirley Mae Pearce Smith, S. Christie Smith IV and E. Pearce Smith.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE