

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 83

BY SENATORS ALARIO, ALLAIN, APPEL, BARROW, BISHOP, BOUDREAUX, BROWN, CARTER, CHABERT, CLAITOR, COLOMB, CORTEZ, DONAHUE, ERDEY, FANNIN, GATTI, HEWITT, JOHNS, LAFLEUR, LAMBERT, LONG, LUNEAU, MARTINY, MILKOVICH, MILLS, MIZELL, MORRELL, MORRISH, PEACOCK, PERRY, PETERSON, RISER, GARY SMITH, JOHN SMITH, TARVER, THOMPSON, WALSWORTH, WARD AND WHITE

A RESOLUTION

To commend the Honorable David R. Heitmeier, OD, former state senator representing District Seven and the parishes of Orleans, Jefferson, and Plaquemines, for his outstanding accomplishments and exemplary public service to the citizens of the state of Louisiana.

WHEREAS, it is with great pride that the members of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana recognize the Honorable David R. Heitmeier for a job well done and for his singular efforts to affect positive change in government through his extraordinary legislative service; and

WHEREAS, as a lifelong resident of Algiers, Dr. David Heitmeier has rendered a remarkable record of public service, having rigorously served the communities of Gretna, Terrytown, Harvey, and Belle Chasse with prestige for eight years; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure Dr. Heitmeier embodied the best qualities of a public servant possessing honesty and integrity and taking personal responsibility to address the issues of his constituency that included delivery of health care services and local transportation infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, David Richard Heitmeier was born the youngest son of Dewey J. Heitmeier, an Algiers businessman, and Barbara "Bobbie" Cargol Heitmeier, a judicial employee of the Orleans Parish Civil District Court, and reared along with two older brothers, Francis and Robert "Bobby" Heitmeier, in an exuberant household flavored with the influences of New Orleans culture and local politics; and

WHEREAS, after attending Holy Cross High School in New Orleans, David obtained an undergraduate degree in biological, mathematical, and physical sciences from the University of Southwestern Louisiana, now known as the University of Louisiana at Lafayette; and he later graduated with a Doctor of Optometry from the University of Houston in 1987; and

WHEREAS, choosing to return to the community that he loved, David founded the optometric practice of Heitmeier & Armani Medical & Surgical Eyecare; his hard work and innovation earned him the admiration of his colleagues; and his acumen in patient care and medical ethics led to speaking engagements at regional and national conferences; and

WHEREAS, in 2007, with a genuine interest in the needs of the people and with the encouragement of family and friends, David Heitmeier ran a successful campaign and succeeded in capturing the Senate seat previously held by his brother, the Honorable Francis C. Heitmeier, and was successfully reelected in 2011, without opposition; and

WHEREAS, during his two terms, David garnered committee assignments to Senate Judiciary B as vice chairman, Transportation, Highways and Public Works, Environmental Quality, and Revenue and Fiscal Affairs; and

WHEREAS, it was as chairman of the Senate Health and Welfare Committee that Senator Heitmeier focused on health planning, preventative public health measures, smoking cessation, nutrition, and obesity studies; and instituted policy changes like the Upper Payment Limit program that increased federal matching funds earmarked for hospitals and health care providers to offset the costs for uncompensated care; and

WHEREAS, Senator Heitmeier penned legislation to address local issues of funding for transportation improvements in drainage, infrastructure, traffic flow, bridges and tunnel repairs; and

WHEREAS, after hurricanes Gustav and Ike, Senator Heitmeier worked with parish governments to assure eyecare assistance for storm victims; and

WHEREAS, many professional, civic, and nonprofit agencies have benefitted from his active participation which include the American Optometric Association, the Louisiana Optometric Association, the Algiers Economic Development Foundation, the Plaquemines Association of Business and Industry, the Ochsner West Bank Health Systems, Special Olympics, and Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Louisiana, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, David Heitmeier has been the recipient of numerous accolades in association with his professional and legislative accomplishments, far too numerous to count, however his recognition as the 2015 Optometrist of the Year by the American Optometric Association, the Inspired Cross Award by the Daughters of Charity Services of New Orleans, and the Extra Mile of Southeast Louisiana, Inc. 2015 Health Care Champion Award, have brought particular satisfaction; and

WHEREAS, although the demands of public life keep him quite busy, be assured that family is always his first concern; elder daughter, Leah Elizabeth, has followed in her father's footsteps to obtain a doctor of Optometry degree from his alma mater, the University of Houston, and younger daughter, Meghan Rose, has obtained an undergraduate degree in education from Southeastern Louisiana University; and the successes of his children fill his heart with pride; and

WHEREAS, as David Heitmeier returns to the private sector, he deserves heartfelt thanks for those extraordinary strides conected to improve health care delivery while serving as an exceptional member of the Louisiana Legislature.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend former senator, David R. Heitmeier, OD, for his years of dedicated public service to this body and the state of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby wish for Dr. David Heitmeier every success in all future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to David R. Heitmeier, OD.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE