

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 97

BY SENATORS MARIONNEAUX, ADLEY, ALARIO, AMEDEE, BROOME, CASSIDY, CHAISSON, CHEEK, CRAVINS, CROWE, DONAHUE, DORSEY, DUPLESSIS, DUPRE, ERDEY, B. GAUTREAUX, N. GAUTREAUX, GRAY, HEBERT, HEITMEIER, JACKSON, KOSTELKA, LAFLEUR, LONG, MARTINY, MCPHERSON, MICHOT, MORRISH, MOUNT, MURRAY, NEVERS, QUINN, RISER, SHAW, SHEPHERD, SMITH, THOMPSON AND WALSWORTH

A RESOLUTION

To express the sincere and heartfelt condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana to the family of United States Marine Corps Corporal Chris LeBleu upon his death from an illness contracted during his deployment to Operation Iraqi Freedom.

WHEREAS, United States Marine Corps Corporal Chris LeBleu was a native of Lake Charles, Louisiana, where he was a 2002 graduate of St. Louis High School and attended McNeese State University; and

WHEREAS, Corporal LeBleu loved life, his family, and his friends, but he also had a deep love and affection for his country and felt a strong need to serve in the armed forces and in 2003, he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps and joined his country's War On Terror; and

WHEREAS, Corporal LeBleu thrived in the tough Marine Corps training at Parris Island, South Carolina, survived The Crucible, received a meritorious promotion to Private First Class and reported for his first duty station, 29 Palms, California, where he continued to train and prepare for his coming deployment to Iraq; and

WHEREAS, Corporal LeBleu served with great courage in the combat zone with the 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, earning the respect of his fellow Marines for his toughness, determination, and dedication to the Marine Corps and the nickname "Bleu" by platoon comrades for his sense of humor and south Louisiana easy-going nature; and

WHEREAS, Corporal LeBleu was a rifleman in the Iraqi Theater of Operations and saw heavy combat with insurgents on the Syrian border where weapons and enemy forces were being slipped into Iraq; and

WHEREAS, Corporal LeBleu returned to the 29 Palms Base in September, 2004, and married his beloved Melany in October, but their happiness was tragically cut short when he fell ill from a mysterious virus, believed to have been contracted in Iraq, that ravaged his liver and left him fighting for his life; and

WHEREAS, while Corporal LeBleu received a liver transplant, a second virus attacked his bone marrow, spurring his fellow Marines, the San Bernadino County Blood Bank, Life Share Blood Bank in Lake Charles and many others to conduct the second largest bone marrow drive in United States' history, adding nearly eight thousand names for the national bone marrow registry; and

WHEREAS, when a bone marrow match could not be found, Corporal LeBleu fought on with the help of platelet and red blood cell transfusions, but he never fully recovered from the liver transplant or the blood disorder and by August, 13, 2007, the twenty-five year old combat veteran, now battling pneumonia, would succumb to an illness that did to him what the enemy could not do to him in Iraq; and

WHEREAS, the loss of Corporal LeBleu was almost more than his loved ones could bear, profoundly affecting his wife, Melany, his mother, Susan, his step-father, Eric, his younger brother, Blake, his little sister, Hanna, and his grieving dog, Bailey; and

WHEREAS, Corporal LeBleu would become a national hero, known for his brave fight against an incurable disease and a true inspiration to those that knew and loved him and those who did not know him but were moved to help him in his gallant struggle.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby extend its deepest sympathies and condolences to the family of United States Marine Corps Corporal Chris LeBleu for their immeasurable loss and in grateful recognition of the remarkable life of a true American hero.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the wife and the mother of United States Marine Corps Corporal Chris LeBleu.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE