

2018 Third Extraordinary Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 16

BY SENATOR BISHOP

CONDOLENCES. Expresses sincere and heartfelt condolences upon the death of Judge Joan Bernard Armstrong.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To express the sincere condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the  
3 passing of Judge Joan Bernard Armstrong of New Orleans and to note her many  
4 accomplishments as a public servant and as an instrument for change in the judiciary  
5 of the state.

6 WHEREAS, it is with deep sadness that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana  
7 has learned of the passing of Judge Joan Bernard Armstrong, a magnanimous public servant  
8 and former Chief Judge of the Court of Appeal, Fourth Circuit, State of Louisiana; and

9 WHEREAS, an advocate for juvenile justice, the Honorable Joan Bernard Armstrong  
10 was appointed to a juvenile court judgeship by Governor Edwin Edwards in January 1974  
11 and was elected without opposition to that post in the Orleans Parish Juvenile Court in June  
12 of that year; historically, the first female and the first African-American woman elected to  
13 the judiciary in the state of Louisiana; and

14 WHEREAS, she served as the court's administrative judge from 1979 until 1981 and  
15 on the court until 1984; and

16 WHEREAS, in 1984, Judge Armstrong was elected without opposition to the state  
17 Court of Appeal, Fourth Circuit and became the first female appellate jurist; she became  
18 chief judge of that court in 2003 and served in that position until her retirement in 2012; and

1           WHEREAS, Judge Armstrong served as a role model for other African-American  
2 jurists, many of whom sought her guidance; she was a mentor and a source of inspiration for  
3 many legal professionals; and

4           WHEREAS, known for her keen insight and understanding, she shared her  
5 scholarship with others as an adjunct professor of law at Southern University Law Center  
6 and at the Dr. Martin Luther King Criminal Justice Center located at Grambling State  
7 University, and as a contributor to the American Judges Association Education Committee;  
8 and

9           WHEREAS, as a distinguished alumna of McDonogh 35 Senior High School, she  
10 matriculated to Xavier University and graduated in 1963; and

11           WHEREAS, while employed as a school teacher, Judge Armstrong attended night  
12 classes at Loyola University New Orleans College of Law to earn a jurist doctor in 1967; and

13           WHEREAS, during her lengthy tenure on the bench, she administered justice on  
14 behalf of the state and families and children brought before her in juvenile court and  
15 authored extensive jurisprudence on a multitude of matters before her as an appellate jurist;  
16 and

17           WHEREAS, Judge Armstrong wielded influence in state judiciary circles as chair  
18 of the Louisiana Conference of Court of Appeal Judges and as a member of the Judiciary  
19 Budgetary Board, the Judicial Ethics Committee, the Judicial Human Resources Committee,  
20 and the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Criminal  
21 Justice; and

22           WHEREAS, Judge Armstrong was acknowledged for her public service by the  
23 receipt of a plethora of awards and honors far too numerous to count from judicial, fraternal,  
24 religious, civic, philanthropic, educational, and national organizations that recognized her  
25 exemplary community service and activism; and

26           WHEREAS, Judge Armstrong was presented with several awards of note from the  
27 National Bar Association, including "Jurist of the Year" Award by the Women's Lawyers  
28 Division and the "William H. Hastie" Award by the Judicial Council; and

29           WHEREAS, in January 2012, Judge Armstrong stepped down from the bench after  
30 thirty-seven years of exceptional public service, which made her the longest-serving judge

1 in the state of Louisiana at the time; and

2 WHEREAS, in retirement, Judge Armstrong was sought after as a keynote speaker  
3 and conferee by numerous judicial organizations; and

4 WHEREAS, the legacy of Judge Joan Bernard Armstrong is woven into the lives of  
5 those individuals she encountered throughout her lifetime and in her positive influence that  
6 has endured in generations of children and young adults; and

7 WHEREAS, Judge Armstrong was preceded in death by her husband, Andrew, and  
8 survived by a son, former state representative the Reverend David Armstrong; a daughter,  
9 Anna-Karletta Armstrong Alexander; two grandchildren, Amaya Alexander and Joshua  
10 Alexander Jr.; and a host of beloved friends; and

11 WHEREAS, Judge Joan Bernard Armstrong was an uncommon individual of  
12 extraordinary moral character and abiding faith, who supported the legal principles of gender  
13 equity and racial equality that she knew to be just and righteous, and the ethical concept that  
14 all human beings were to be afforded equal protection before the law.

15 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana  
16 does hereby express sincere and heartfelt condolences upon the passing of Judge Joan  
17 Bernard Armstrong, formerly of the Orleans Parish Juvenile Court and Chief Judge of the  
18 Court of Appeal, Fourth Circuit, State of Louisiana, for her tireless dedication to the  
19 improvement of the administration of justice in Louisiana.

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does  
21 hereby recognize her outstanding public service to the city of New Orleans, the state of  
22 Louisiana, and the nation.

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the  
24 family of Judge Joan Bernard Armstrong.

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The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part  
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Susan P. Montague.

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DIGEST

SR 16 Original

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Bishop

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