

1 WHEREAS, Louis continued his education at the Southern University School of Law
2 and later transferred to Loyola University School of Law in New Orleans, where he received
3 a juris doctorate in 1974; while in law school, he served as an instructor of American
4 government at Southern University at New Orleans; and

5 WHEREAS, upon graduating from law school, Louis worked as an assistant district
6 attorney for the city of New Orleans; he also worked as a member of the board of arbitrators
7 for the Longshoreman Union and the New Orleans Steamship Association; and

8 WHEREAS, although Louis was a talented prosecutor, he chose to return to school
9 and begin a career as a law professor; in 1975, he accepted a position as an assistant
10 professor of law and director of the Law Clinic at Southern University School of Law in
11 Baton Rouge; and

12 WHEREAS, Louis moved his family back to New Orleans to enable him to teach at
13 Loyola University School of Law, where he taught subjects ranging from criminal law to
14 constitutional law, and became a tenured professor of law; while at Loyola, he was actively
15 involved in many organizations, including the boards of the Urban League, New Orleans
16 Legal Assistance Corporation, and Big Brothers; in 1977, the United States Jaycees named
17 him the "Outstanding Young Man in America" in recognition of his accomplishments; and

18 WHEREAS, in 1979, Louis and his family moved to New York to allow him to
19 pursue advanced legal studies at Columbia University School of Law, and in 1980, he
20 received a master of law degree in constitutional and criminal law; and

21 WHEREAS, in 1983, Louis and his family moved to Mississippi, where he taught
22 at the University of Mississippi School of Law and became the school's first tenured African
23 American law professor; he remained dedicated to community service and chaired the
24 Mississippi Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights from
25 1985 to 1986; and

26 WHEREAS, in 1986, Louis authored and published a legal textbook on the law of
27 Louisiana evidence, and 1991, he coauthored a second revised edition of the book; and

28 WHEREAS, Professor Westerfield became the dean of North Carolina Central
29 University in June 1986, at the age of thirty-six; under his leadership, the school improved
30 its library, bar passage rates, and faculty scholarships; while in North Carolina, he was

1 actively involved with Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity; he served as dean for four years and
2 developed a national reputation as a hard-working, friendly, and demanding leader; and

3 WHEREAS, in 1990, Dean Westerfield was named dean of Loyola University
4 School of Law, making him the first African American dean in the school's history; over the
5 course of his four-year tenure as dean, he oversaw a historic diversification of the school's
6 student body, faculty, and staff, and the school expanded services and raised record amounts
7 of funds for endowed professorships, scholarships, and operations; and

8 WHEREAS, while at Loyola, Dean Westerfield was recruited to join the board of
9 directors of the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law in Washington, D.C.; in this
10 role, he and other civil rights leaders met with President Bill Clinton at the White House to
11 discuss national civil rights issues; and

12 WHEREAS, in 1992, Dean Westerfield received an honorary doctorate of laws from
13 Southern University at New Orleans; at this time, he was active in numerous civic
14 organizations, including the Bureau of Governmental Research, Greater New Orleans
15 Foundation, World Trade Center, and Southern University at New Orleans Foundation; and

16 WHEREAS, during the summer of 1994, Dean Westerfield accepted an appointment
17 from the Louisiana Supreme Court to serve as an appellate judge for the Second Circuit
18 Court of Appeal; he was also presented with the prestigious A.P. Tureaud Black Citizenship
19 Medal from the NAACP of Louisiana and received awards from the American Bar
20 Association, the Louis A. Martinet Society, and Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity; and

21 WHEREAS, Dean Westerfield returned to Mississippi in July 1994 to serve as the
22 dean and director of the University of Mississippi School of Law; he was the first African
23 American to serve in this role, and his administration was distinguished through numerous
24 notable achievements, including an increase in the school endowment by over one million
25 dollars and a substantial increase in the Lamar Order endowment and membership; during
26 his tenure, the number of minority students enrolled at the school doubled; and

27 WHEREAS, in 1995, Dean Westerfield was awarded an honorary doctorate of laws
28 from Dillard University, and his accomplishments were featured in a profile published in
29 *EBONY* magazine; in 1996, Tougaloo College presented him with an honorary doctorate of

1 laws, and he was one of twenty-eight people in the United States who were profiled in Nestle
2 Corporation's *Men of Courage*; and

3 WHEREAS, despite Dean Louis Westerfield's untimely passing on August 24, 1996,
4 he forged an unforgettable legacy of dedication to excellence and service to family,
5 education, scholarship, and community; he is among Louisiana's most cherished sons, and
6 his forty-seven years of trailblazing achievements are worthy of the highest recognition.

7 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the
8 Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commemorate the legacy of Louis Westerfield; does
9 hereby recognize his trailblazing achievements in the legal profession; and does hereby
10 extend enduring appreciation for his many contributions to the state of Louisiana and
11 beyond.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HR 81 Original

2026 Regular Session

Taylor

Commends the legacy of Louis Westerfield.