

2026 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 180

BY SENATOR DUPLESSIS

CONDOLENCES. Expresses sincere and heartfelt condolences upon the passing of Sharon Courtney.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To express the sincere and heartfelt condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of  
3 Louisiana upon the passing of Sharon Courtney and to honor her life, legacy, and  
4 contributions to the political fabric of the city of New Orleans and state of Louisiana.

5 WHEREAS, it is with profound sorrow that the Senate of the Legislature of  
6 Louisiana has learned of the passing of Sharon Courtney on May 21, 2026, after a brief and  
7 courageous battle with colon cancer; and

8 WHEREAS, Sharon was born in 1965 in Aberdeen, Mississippi, and graduated from  
9 the University of Mississippi in 1987 with a degree in journalism; and

10 WHEREAS, after graduating, Sharon moved to Washington, D.C., and began her  
11 career of thirty-eight years in government relations as a legislative assistant on Capitol Hill,  
12 first, in the office of Congressman Larkin Smith and then in the office of Congressman John  
13 Murtha where she spent five and one-half years focusing on health care and education issues;  
14 and

15 WHEREAS, in 1994, Sharon moved to New Orleans, Louisiana where she called  
16 home for the next thirty-two years and which became one of the loves of her life; and

17 WHEREAS, Sharon brought her valuable experience on Capitol Hill to Tulane  
18 University where she spent over thirty years leading community and government relations;

1 and

2 WHEREAS, Sharon was a key advisor to Tulane's president Scott Cowen and played  
3 a vital role in reopening the university after Hurricane Katrina's floodwaters devastated the  
4 city and scattered students to other campuses; and

5 WHEREAS, Sharon was a champion for the rebuilding of the city post-Katrina  
6 whose efforts led to securing two hundred seventy-five million dollars in crucial funding for  
7 all the city's public and private universities; and

8 WHEREAS, Sharon was named a YLC Role Model by the Young Leadership  
9 Council in the spring of 2006; and

10 WHEREAS, during her tenure at Tulane University, she successfully managed  
11 community relations to secure the city's approval for a new on-campus football stadium  
12 which helped to energize the football program; and

13 WHEREAS, she was instrumental in kickstarting the New Orleans BioDistrict and  
14 creating a strategic plan for the twelve hundred acre economic development district aimed  
15 at growing the biosciences sector; and

16 WHEREAS, in February of 2025, Sharon struck out on her own, founding Neutral  
17 Ground Strategies, and continuing her higher education work by helping the University of  
18 New Orleans shore up its funding, all while in the hospital during her final days; and

19 WHEREAS, Sharon's professional work was not the only way she helped make New  
20 Orleans a better place to live, she also served in leadership roles for various boards,  
21 including Market Umbrella, ReNEW Schools, and the Data Center; and

22 WHEREAS, Sharon often referred to as one of the few honest brokers left in the  
23 policy world, gained a reputation as a steadfast advocate of the truth, and she constantly  
24 strived to make the world a better place; and

25 WHEREAS, Sharon was known to be a person of high moral character, respect,  
26 honesty, and integrity, even when what she had to say was not popular; and

27 WHEREAS, Sharon had a deep love of New Orleans and its cultural traditions  
28 attended Jazz Fest every year she lived in the city, becoming a member of the Krewe of  
29 Muses and the Krewe of Dolly, and purchasing Saints season tickets in 2006, and was  
30 rewarded with a string of playoff games and a Super Bowl trip to Miami, Florida; and

