

2016 Regular Session

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 128

BY SENATOR ALARIO

CONDOLENCES. Expresses condolences upon the death of former Lieutenant Governor Bobby Freeman.

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To express the sincere and heartfelt condolences of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the  
3 passing of a beloved gentleman and mainstay in Louisiana politics, the Honorable  
4 Robert L. "Bobby" Freeman, and to celebrate the legacy of public service he leaves  
5 to his community, state, and nation.

6 WHEREAS, it was with deep regret that the Legislature of Louisiana learned of the  
7 death of former Lieutenant Governor Bobby Freeman who passed peacefully from this life  
8 on May 16, 2016, a short time after his eighty-second birthday; and

9 WHEREAS, Bobby Freeman was a humble servant of the people, eager to improve  
10 the status quo of those he served whether as legislator, statewide elected official, or city  
11 court judge; he was one of a rare breed who served at each level of government; and

12 WHEREAS, Bobby Freeman was also a pioneer, far ahead of his time, who  
13 envisioned enormous growth potential in the promotion and development of tourism as a  
14 cornerstone in building a new economic future for the state of Louisiana; and

15 WHEREAS, born in Washington, D.C. and a lifelong resident of Iberville Parish,  
16 Robert Louis Freeman was a stellar athlete and boxer at Plaquemine High School where he  
17 won the 1951 Louisiana State Boxing Championship for his weight class; and

18 WHEREAS, as a talented pugilist in the ring, he was awarded an athletic scholarship

1 to attend Louisiana State University where as a varsity letterman he held three consecutive  
2 Sugar Bowl boxing championship titles, placed twice as runner-up in the National College  
3 Athletic Association Boxing Championship, received the prestigious Billings Memorial  
4 Award for Boxing, and was inducted into the LSU Athletic Hall of Fame in 1977; and

5 WHEREAS, Bobby Freeman distinguished himself in military service as a special  
6 agent in the United States Army Counter-Intelligence Corps and was honorably discharged  
7 in 1959; and

8 WHEREAS, he obtained a law degree from Loyola University Law School in 1965,  
9 and established the law firm of Freeman and Pendley in Plaquemine; his legal career  
10 spanned more than five decades for which he received accolades from his peers and the  
11 Louisiana State Bar Association; and

12 WHEREAS, as a man of God, Bobby Freeman was a compassionate individual and  
13 lifelong democrat who felt a close connection to the less fortunate and felt compelled to be  
14 a voice for the disadvantaged and downtrodden; and

15 WHEREAS, in 1966, Bobby Freeman first answered the call to public service as  
16 chairman of the Plaquemine Planning and Zoning Commission, then ran for the first of three  
17 terms in the Legislature of Louisiana; he tirelessly represented the constituency of the  
18 Sixtieth District of the House of Representatives composed of the parishes of Iberville,  
19 Pointe Coupee, and West Baton Rouge; his legislative tenure spanned the administrations  
20 of governors John J. McKeithen and Edwin W. Edwards; and

21 WHEREAS, this was an exciting era in state government, as the transitional period  
22 before and after adoption of the Louisiana Constitution of 1974, when broad changes were  
23 applied to governmental functions; and

24 WHEREAS, Representative Freeman performed his duties with noteworthy aplomb,  
25 with membership on standing house committees that included Labor and Industrial  
26 Relations, Appropriations, Judiciary A, House and Governmental Affairs, and the special  
27 committee on Affairs of the House; he also provided invaluable guidance as floor leader for  
28 Governor Edwin Edwards; and

29 WHEREAS, through his extraordinary talents for compromise, he excelled as a  
30 strong supporter of organized labor, education, rural health care, and law enforcement; and

1           WHEREAS, an aggressive campaigner, Bobby Freeman became the 47th lieutenant  
2           governor for the state in 1980 and during his two consecutive terms he changed the course  
3           of the state's future, bolstered its economic capacities, and ushered in a new age of marketing  
4           tactics that propelled tourism into a viable growth industry; and

5           WHEREAS, consolidation of the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism  
6           and related functions within the office of lieutenant governor, had provided a launch pad for  
7           Bobby Freeman to centralize efforts to align Louisiana's unique culture and cuisine with  
8           promotion of its festivals, parks, museums, and other attractions which were coupled  
9           together with aggressive promotion of must-see locales throughout the entire state that  
10          expanded the popularity of Louisiana tourism beyond the realm of America's favorite tourist  
11          destination, the city of New Orleans; and

12          WHEREAS, his foresight has produced a hospitality industry that performs as one  
13          of the more outstanding generators in the state's economic engine; tourism venues annually  
14          employ more than 220,000 workers who welcome twenty-eight million visitors who spend  
15          an estimated \$11.2 billion in tourist dollars which results in an estimated \$836 million in tax  
16          revenue; and by today's national estimates, Louisiana ranks fourth among all tourism  
17          markets in the United States; and

18          WHEREAS, in 1990, Bobby Freeman was elected for a six-year term as judge for  
19          the Plaquemine City Court, then stepped down from public life to practice law and to  
20          occasionally consult with young aspiring politicians; and

21          WHEREAS, he was honored with copious acknowledgments and awards during his  
22          lifetime that include receipt of the Louisiana National Guard Cross of Merit, the Martin  
23          Luther King Jr. Humanitarian Award, the A. Philip Randolph Institute Award (twice), the  
24          United Native American Appreciation Award (twice), the Catholic Daughters of America  
25          Recognition Award, induction into the LSU Athletic Hall of Fame, the NCAA College  
26          Athletics Top 10 Hall of Fame, the Louisiana American Italian Sports Hall of Fame, the  
27          USA Southern Region Association Hall of Fame, the National Italian American Sports Hall  
28          of Fame, plus receipt of a knighthood from the Republic of Italy in recognition of his  
29          community service and his athletic and professional careers; and

30          WHEREAS, a very special and heartfelt recognition for Bobby Freeman as a

1 statesman was his induction into the Louisiana Political Hall of Fame in 2008; and

2 WHEREAS, Bobby Freeman did not shy away from controversy, he embraced  
3 opposition, he did not back down from a cause that he felt was right and just; he was brave  
4 in the face of resistance, yet kind-hearted and courteous to all; and

5 WHEREAS, Lieutenant Governor Bobby Freeman and Governor Edwin Edwards  
6 remained friends for the remainder of his life; Edwards remembered him fondly as, "a giant  
7 of a man who never said a cross word . . . he was concerned with opportunities for the poor  
8 and underprivileged . . . we've remained the best of friends both personally and politically";  
9 and

10 WHEREAS, Bobby Freeman is survived by his wife of fifty-seven years, Marianne  
11 Drago Freeman, his children, Robert Jr. and Lisa Freeman Guidry; his granddaughter Mary  
12 Katherine Freeman Koch, extended family, and cherished friends; and

13 WHEREAS, Winston Churchill once said, "What is the use of living, if it be not to  
14 strive for noble causes and to make this muddled world a better place for those who will live  
15 in it after we are gone?"; and

16 WHEREAS, Bobby Freeman was such a man and with his passing, the Legislature  
17 of Louisiana has lost a dear friend and colleague and the citizens of Louisiana have lost a  
18 dedicated, compassionate community leader; and

19 WHEREAS, in death, Bobby Freeman leaves a tremendous void in this state,  
20 however, he also leaves a rich and enduring legacy in the annals of Louisiana's political  
21 history as a forefather of Louisiana tourism and consummate public servant having provided  
22 leadership at all levels of government that include legislative, executive, judicial, and local  
23 administrations.

24 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby  
25 express heartfelt condolences upon the death of the Honorable Robert L. "Bobby" Freeman,  
26 former Lieutenant Governor, legislator, and judge for the state of Louisiana and does hereby  
27 celebrate the admirable legacy he leaves to this state.

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Bobby Freeman shall be fondly remembered for  
29 his dignity, his compassion, and his service to his God, his state, and his country.

30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the

1 family of the Honorable Robert L. "Bobby" Freeman.

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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	
SCR 128 Original	2016 Regular Session	Alario
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