

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 137

BY SENATORS THOMPSON, ALARIO, ALLAIN, APPEL, BARROW, BISHOP, BOUDREAUX, CARTER, CHABERT, CLAITOR, COLOMB, CORTEZ, DONAHUE, ERDEY, FANNIN, GATTI, HEWITT, JOHNS, LAFLEUR, LAMBERT, LONG, LUNEAU, MARTINY, MILKOVICH, MILLS, MIZELL, MORRELL, MORRISH, PEACOCK, PERRY, PETERSON, RISER, GARY SMITH, JOHN SMITH, TARVER, WALSWORTH, WARD AND WHITE

A RESOLUTION

To express the sincere condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the death of Alan Ray "Al" Ater, who formerly served as a member of the Louisiana House of Representatives and as secretary of state.

WHEREAS, it is with deep regret and profound sorrow that the members of the Louisiana Senate have learned of the death of Alan Ray "Al" Ater on Sunday, May 21, 2017, at the age of sixty-three; and

WHEREAS, a native of Decatur, Illinois, and a longtime resident of Ferriday, Louisiana, Mr. Ater was a respected and admired individual who made a tremendous impact on this state; and

WHEREAS, Al Ater was born on December 15, 1953, the youngest of the five children of Donald Edward Ater and the former Ruth Lavonne Chapman; and

WHEREAS, after his family moved to Louisiana, he graduated in 1971 from Huntington High School in Ferriday and then attended Northwestern State University in Natchitoches; and

WHEREAS, first and foremost, Al Ater was a farmer and steward of the land and on his Lakeland Planting Company, farmed corn, cotton, soybeans, and rice in several parishes of northeast Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, in 1984, Al Ater was elected to the Louisiana House of Representatives where he served until 1992; and

WHEREAS, he used every opportunity as an able and productive legislator to serve the people of Catahoula, Concordia, and Tensas parishes and all of his fellow citizens in an honorable and dedicated manner; and

WHEREAS, as the state representative for District 21, Mr. Ater served diligently as a member of several committees, including the House Committee on Agriculture, the House Committee on Enrollment, the House Committee on House and Governmental Affairs, the House Committee on Ways and Means, and the House Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works, of which he served as vice chairman, and the House Legislative Services Council; and

WHEREAS, opting not to run for reelection after his second term in the legislature, Mr. Ater returned to the private sector; and

WHEREAS, in 2001, he was named Secretary of State Fox McKeithen's first assistant; he then worked as first deputy in the Department of Insurance for a year before returning to the secretary of state's office; and

WHEREAS, in 2005, following Mr. McKeithen's death, Mr. Ater served as secretary of state; and

WHEREAS, Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita struck the state while Mr. Ater served in this office, and he was widely praised for his handling of complex election issues in the aftermath of these historic storms; and

WHEREAS, in 2009, Mr. Ater was deservedly recognized for his accomplishments and contributions as a public servant when he was inducted into the Louisiana Political Museum and Hall of Fame, and the following year, he retired from public service in order to focus on his primary passions of farming and family; and

WHEREAS, throughout the course of his life and career, Mr. Ater generously shared his time, talents, and expertise through his work with the Louisiana Tourism Development Commission, the Governor's Advisory Council on Disability Affairs, the Concordia Parish Farm Bureau, Catalyst Energy in Vidalia, the Louisiana School Employees' Retirement System, the Louisiana Workers' Compensation Second Injury Board, the International Association of Corporation Administrators, and the National Association of Secretaries of State; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Ater was preceded in death by his parents, Donald Edward and Lavonne Ater, and his sister, Kay Ater Goeggle; he is survived by his wife of thirty-two years, Susie Beard Ater; his children, Whitney Lauren Ater, Thomas Ater, and Elliott Ater;

his grandsons, Soren Riker, Kai Riker, and Benton Ater; his granddaughters, Maya Fuentes and Graciela Fuentes; his siblings, Donald Ater, Lynette Ater Tanner, and Edward Ater; and numerous nieces and nephews; and

WHEREAS, the death of Mr. Ater has left a great void and created a genuine sense of sorrow in all who knew him, including the members of the Senate family, all of whom mourn the loss of this wonderful man who served his state so well; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Ater will never be forgotten, leaves a rich and unique legacy, and is greatly missed by the many citizens whose lives he touched.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express sincere and heartfelt condolences upon the death of Alan Ray "Al" Ater; does hereby recognize and record for posterity his notable accomplishments and singular contributions during his eight-year tenure as a member of the Louisiana House of Representatives and his distinguished service as secretary of state; and does hereby extend enduring appreciation for this wonderful man who will forever bring pride and honor to his family, his community, and his state.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the family of Al Ater.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE