

2019 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 276

BY REPRESENTATIVE LEGER

A RESOLUTION

To express the condolences of the House of Representatives upon the death of David Fermin Gallegos and to posthumously commend his service.

WHEREAS, the members of the House of Representatives were saddened to learn of the death of David Gallegos on November 14, 2018, at the age of fifty-three; and

WHEREAS, David was born on May 30, 1965, to Johnny Gallegos and Onofre Molina in New Mexico; his parents passed away when he was five years old, and he was raised by his sister, Florence; when David was fifteen years old, they moved together to Jefferson Parish; a graduate of Grace King High School, David earned his bachelor's degree from the University of New Orleans; and

WHEREAS, he decided to make New Orleans his permanent home, a city with as much style, vibrancy, and personality as David himself; David Gallegos was a man of great character and served his kith and kin as a true friend; he was a staunch advocate for the disabled and Latino communities in the city of New Orleans and the state of Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, in 2000, he took on the role of program director at the Advocacy Center, the mission of which is to clear the path to education, employment, housing, voting, health care, and community services for Louisianians who have a physical, intellectual, or mental disability, or who are over the age of sixty; he held the position until the time of his death; and

WHEREAS, during his nearly two decades at the Advocacy Center, he was known for his drive to assist people with disabilities with every aspect of securing and maintaining employment, from the application and interview process to developing social skills to coordinating transportation; he earned the gratitude and respect of thousands of clients and their families; and

WHEREAS, he served on dozens of committees, including the Greater New Orleans Disaster Recovery Partnership Executive Committee, the Mayor's Advisory Council for

Citizens with Disabilities, and the Brain Injury Alliance of Louisiana, for which he served as vice president; and

WHEREAS, in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, David was helping with recovery within days after the storm; he and his colleagues from the Advocacy Center repaired houses ravaged by Katrina; thereafter, whenever there was a threat of a storm for the greater New Orleans area, David volunteered to help, translating for non-English speakers, living on-site at shelters to help with intake, reaching out to people who were undocumented who might not have otherwise gotten the assistance they needed, and helping people with disabilities any way he could; and

WHEREAS, David Gallegos co-founded the Latino Forum of New Orleans and the Louisiana Language Access Coalition (LLAC); LLAC was formed to help eliminate barriers for people for whom English is not their first language; he was a board member of Puentes New Orleans; formed in 2007, Puentes works to overcome economic, racial, and cultural divides and to provide Latin American families and communities with the resources, knowledge, and hands-on opportunities they need to thrive; and

WHEREAS, in 2008, the Advocacy Center recognized David Gallegos with its Tom Bellanger Award, given to an employee who excels in job performance, positive attitude, willingness to help, and dedication; and in 2013, the National Football League and Hispanic Heritage Foundation presented him with the Leadership Award for his contributions to the New Orleans community; and

WHEREAS, his work with the Governor's Employment First Task Force helped pave the way to Governor Edwards's executive order, issued in April of 2018, outlining steps to improve employment rates for Louisiana residents with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, wherever he went, David was the life of the party; he relished spending holidays with friends, especially Mardi Gras and Halloween; he was an avid bargain hunter and thrift shopper and enjoyed tending to his garden; and

WHEREAS, left to cherish David's memory are his siblings, Florence Gallegos, Arnold Gallegos, and Darlene Rodriguez; and numerous nieces, nephews, friends, and former colleagues and clients; and

WHEREAS, David Fermin Gallegos will be remembered as a devoted friend and a loving family member; his efforts toward improving the welfare of his fellow citizens will forever be cherished.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express condolences on the death of David Fermin Gallegos and posthumously commend his service; does hereby recognize and record for posterity his passion for serving others and the impact he made on the New Orleans community; and does hereby offer prayers for peace and comfort to those who mourn the loss of David Gallegos.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the family of David Fermin Gallegos.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES