

2020 Second Extraordinary Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 17

BY SENATOR CARTER

CONDOLENCES. Expresses the condolences on the death of George Rainey, oldest elected king of Zulu.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To express the sincere condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the
3 death of George V. Rainey, who was the oldest elected king of Zulu, who reigned at
4 Mardi Gras in 2019, and who died at the age of eighty-nine on October 16, 2020.

5 WHEREAS, George V. Rainey became the oldest elected king of the Zulu Social Aid
6 and Pleasure Club and as his queen he chose his granddaughter, Kailyn Rainey, the youngest
7 woman and first Louisiana State University (LSU) student to reign as queen of Zulu and she
8 was led in the parade by LSU's famed "Golden Band from Tigerland"; and

9 WHEREAS, George Rainey was a native New Orleanian and graduated in the first
10 senior class of Booker T. Washington High School in 1949; and

11 WHEREAS, after service in the United States Army for six years during the Korean
12 War, Mr. Rainey returned home to New Orleans and in 1967 he opened a small restaurant;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, George Rainey expanded the restaurant and moved it to Algiers,
15 Louisiana, where it prospered and, eventually, "Rainey's Restaurant and Catering" became
16 one of the largest Black-owned restaurants in the city; and

17 WHEREAS, Mr. Rainey's business flourished and was a well-known vendor at the
18 New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival and the Essence Festival before closing in 2012; and

1 WHEREAS, George Rainey was a member of Zulu for forty-five years and he served
2 the organization in nearly every leadership position prior to being elected to serve as king
3 in 2019; and

4 WHEREAS, when Mr. Rainey joined in 1972, the krewe had only about sixty
5 members and he was elected "Big Shot" in 1986, beginning his years of serving in the
6 krewe's hierarchy; and

7 WHEREAS, while serving as vice president from 1991 through 1996, George Rainey
8 founded the club's Lundi Gras Festival, along the Mississippi River at Woldenburg Park,
9 now a popular annual event; and

10 WHEREAS, the Lundi Gras Festival is held on the Monday before Mardi Gras, when
11 for many years no seasonal events were scheduled; and

12 WHEREAS, the festival offers live music, food vendors, and the river front arrival
13 of King and Queen Zulu and in 2020 the festival was renamed in honor of its founder,
14 George Rainey; and

15 WHEREAS, Mr. Rainey was dedicated to the offer of fellowship and the civic
16 commitment to service that were at the heart of the Zulu organization and he served on the
17 board of directors for more than twenty-five years; and

18 WHEREAS, as a board member, George Rainey led the drive to produce the club's
19 first poster series in 1983 and its first corporate sponsorship; and

20 WHEREAS, George Rainey would say he was most proud of Zulu's service to its
21 community, saying "we are embedded in the community, with individuals who are
22 concerned that we play a great part in that community"; and

23 WHEREAS, in the wake of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, George Rainey returned to
24 New Orleans to help families in need and with a group led by his pastor at the Fischer
25 Community Church and joined by the 82nd Airborne Division Cooks (United States Army),
26 Rained spent two months preparing and serving food to hungry storm survivors; and

27 WHEREAS, George Rainey was recognized for his community service efforts by
28 President George W. Bush, New Orleans LaToya Cantrell, and the Jefferson Award
29 Foundation; and

30 WHEREAS, George Rainey, a man dedicated to his role as a long time member and

1 officer of Zulu, past king, board member, fund raiser for Zulu, restaurateur, community
2 service activist, founder of the Zulu Lundi Gras Festival, and an extraordinary native son of
3 New Orleans, leaves many roles to be filled in the New Orleans community, within the Zulu
4 Social Aid and Pleasure Club and in the lives of all who were fortunate enough to know him
5 personally.

6 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana
7 does hereby express sincere condolences upon the death of George V. Rainey, who was the
8 oldest elected king of Zulu reigning at Mardi Gras in 2019, and who died at the age of
9 eighty-nine on October 16, 2020.

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
11 family of George V. Rainey.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Mary Dozier O'Brien.

DIGEST

SR 17 Original

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Mardi Gras 2019.