

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 32

BY SENATOR BOUDREAUX

A RESOLUTION

To express the sincere and heartfelt condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the passing of Judge Jules D. Edwards III.

WHEREAS, Lafayette City Court Judge Jules D. Edwards III passed away Tuesday, October 15, 2024, at the age of 66, leaving behind a legacy of service, dedication, and justice; and

WHEREAS, a native of New Orleans, Judge Edwards dedicated more than three decades of his life to serving the people of Lafayette, first as a judge of the 15th Judicial District Court from 1993 to 2020, and most recently as a judge of the Lafayette City Court, from January 1, 2023, until his passing; and

WHEREAS, Judge Edwards served as Chief Judge of the 15th Judicial District Court from 2001 to 2003, during which time he was a pioneer in establishing drug courts and re-entry courts, placing emphasis on rehabilitation and providing second chances for those within the justice system; and

WHEREAS, prior to judicial service, Judge Edwards was a well-known, successful attorney who made significant contributions serving in various roles, including as a partner at Edwards and Edwards Law Offices, indigent defender attorney, assistant district attorney, and counsel to the Louisiana Senate's Select Committee on Crime and Drugs; and

WHEREAS, Judge Edwards was inducted into the Louisiana Justice Hall of Fame in 2013 in recognition of his long-standing service and commitment to justice, and he was the first African-American judge elected to the Lafayette City Court, where he broke barriers and served as an inspiration to many; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his judicial career, Judge Edwards was a leader within the legal community, serving as president of the Louisiana District Judges Association from 2014 to 2015, and as chairman of the Louisiana Judiciary Commission from 2015 to 2016, where he implemented major reforms to judicial oversight and procedure; and

WHEREAS, Judge Edwards also contributed to public policy through his work with the Louisiana Sentencing Commission from 2011 to 2018, where he helped to guide uniform sentencing policies across the state, and proudly served on various councils, including the Advisory Council on Heroin and Opioid Prevention and Education, the Louisiana Drug Policy Board; and since 2021, he was a member of the DWI-Task Force; and

WHEREAS, Judge Edwards was dedicated to educating his peers, and served as Louisiana's Judicial Outreach Liaison, where he taught judges how to handle impaired driving cases and sought to ensure that best practices and fairness were promoted across the judiciary; and

WHEREAS, Judge Edwards' dedication to service was not limited to the courtroom; in 1977, he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps Reserve and later served in the Louisiana National Guard from 1981 until 2007, where he served in the infantry, artillery, and Judge Advocate General's Corps; and

WHEREAS, he proudly served as the 256th Infantry Brigade's Inspector General and the State Judge Advocate; and

WHEREAS, his distinguished military career ended on March 15, 2007, when he retired from the Louisiana National Guard and was honored and recognized as the best Staff Judge Advocate in the United States at that time; and

WHEREAS, Judge Edwards earned his undergraduate and law degrees from Loyola University in New Orleans, a Master of Public Administration from Louisiana State University, and a Master of Strategic Studies from the United States Army War College, exemplifying a lifelong commitment to learning and service; and

WHEREAS, throughout his life, Judge Edwards was deeply committed to his family, including his wife, Orida, his sons, Jules IV and Julien, and his daughter, Juliesa; and his grandson, Julian Jr., and lived by the motto "Dare to Dream", which inspired all those who knew him; and

WHEREAS, Judge Edwards' passing represents a profound loss to the Lafayette community, the legal profession, and the state of Louisiana, but his legacy of service, fairness, and dedication to helping others will continue to inspire and impact lives for generations to come.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby extend sincere and heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of Judge Jules D. Edwards III upon the occasion of his passing.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Orida Broussard Edwards.

---

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE