

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 364

BY REPRESENTATIVE FREEMAN

A RESOLUTION

To express the condolences of the House of Representatives on the death of Sharon Courtney and to honor her life, legacy, and contributions to the political landscape of the city of New Orleans and the state of Louisiana.

WHEREAS, it is with profound sorrow that the Louisiana House of Representatives has learned of the passing of Sharon Courtney on May 21, 2026, after a brief and courageous battle with colon cancer; and

WHEREAS, Sharon was born in 1965 in Aberdeen, Mississippi, and graduated from the University of Mississippi in 1987 with a degree in journalism; and

WHEREAS, Sharon moved to Washington, D.C., and began a thirty-eight-year government relations career as a legislative assistant on Capitol Hill; she started in the office of Congressman Larkin Smith and then served in the office of Congressman John Murtha, where she spent five and a half years focusing on health care and education issues; and

WHEREAS, Sharon moved to New Orleans in 1994 and resided in the city for thirty-two years; and

WHEREAS, Sharon brought her valuable experience on Capitol Hill to Tulane University, where she spent over thirty years as a leader in community and government relations; and

WHEREAS, Sharon was a key advisor to Tulane's president and played a vital role aiding President Scott Cowen in reopening the university after Hurricane Katrina's floodwaters devastated the city and scattered students to other campuses; and

WHEREAS, Sharon was a champion for the rebuilding of the city post-Katrina and led efforts to secure two hundred seventy-five million dollars in crucial funding for all the city's public and private universities; she was named a YLC Role Model by the Young Leadership Council the spring of 2006; and

WHEREAS, during her tenure at Tulane University, Sharon successfully managed community relations to secure city approval for a new on-campus football stadium, which helped to energize the football program; her efforts were also instrumental in kickstarting the New Orleans BioDistrict and creating a strategic plan for the one thousand two hundred-acre economic development district aimed at growing the biosciences sector; and

WHEREAS, Sharon founded Neutral Ground Strategies in February of 2025, and in her final days, she continued to serve higher education by helping the University of New Orleans increase its funding through her work in hospitals; and

WHEREAS, Sharon also served in leadership roles for various boards, including Market Umbrella, ReNEW Schools, and the Data Center; and

WHEREAS, Sharon was often referred to as one of the few honest brokers left in the policy world; she was a steadfast advocate of the truth, constantly strived to make the world a better place, and acted with respect, honesty, and integrity; and

WHEREAS, Sharon had a deep love of New Orleans and its cultural traditions; she attended Jazz Fest every year that she lived in the city, became a member of the Krewe of Muses and the Krewe of Dolly, and purchased Saints season tickets in 2006; and

WHEREAS, above all else, Sharon was a connector of people, a generous and loyal friend, and the consummate host; she was happiest with a crowded table of family and friends in her home, where she often hosted dinners large and small; her generosity was not merely hospitality, but a generosity of the spirit; and

WHEREAS, Sharon leaves behind the legacy of her generosity of spirit that is felt across the country and the world; left to cherish her memory are her husband, Chris Allen, her parents, Jim and Diane Morgan, her siblings, Mark Courtney, Courtney Gregory and her

husband Clay, her beloved nephews, Eli, Fen, Jax, and Clay, and a host of friends and colleagues who carry on her legacy.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express heartfelt condolences on the death of Sharon Courtney; does hereby extend heartfelt condolences to her family and friends; and does hereby honor and celebrate her remarkable life and legacy.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES