

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 19

BY SENATORS CORTEZ, ADLEY, ALARIO, ALLAIN, AMEDEE, APPEL, BROOME, BROWN, BUFFINGTON, CHABERT, CLAITOR, CROWE, DONAHUE, DORSEY-COLOMB, ERDEY, GALLOT, GUILLORY, HEITMEIER, JOHNS, KOSTELKA, LAFLEUR, LONG, MARTINY, MILLS, MORRELL, MORRISH, MURRAY, NEVERS, PEACOCK, PERRY, PETERSON, RISER, GARY SMITH, JOHN SMITH, TARVER, THOMPSON, WALSWORTH, WARD AND WHITE

A RESOLUTION

To express the sincere condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the death of George Rodrigue, an internationally renowned artist, and to recognize his contributions to the state of Louisiana.

WHEREAS, it is with deep regret and profound sorrow that the members of the Louisiana Senate have learned of the death of artist George Rodrigue on Saturday, December 14, 2013, at the age of sixty-nine; and

WHEREAS, George Rodrigue was born on March 13, 1944, in New Iberia, where he grew up as the only child of George and Marie Rodrigue; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Rodrigue began painting as a child and evolved into one of the most well-known and beloved artists in Louisiana history; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Rodrigue studied art at Southwestern Louisiana University, now the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, and the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California, and returned home to Louisiana after his studies, where he settled in Lafayette and embarked on an extraordinary career; and

WHEREAS, much of Mr. Rodrigue's work has roots in the Cajun world where he was born and raised, and while he earned well-deserved acclaim for his portraits and landscapes, as well as his fifteen-work series *Saga of the Acadians*, he was best known for his Blue Dog paintings, which were inspired by a childhood story of the myth of the *loup-garou*, a Cajun werewolf or ghost dog; and

WHEREAS, the Blue Dog is an artistic and cultural icon that is recognized the world over; as Mr. Rodrigue himself is quoted saying in The New York Times in 1998, "People who have seen a Blue Dog painting always remember it. They are really about life, about mankind searching for answers"; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his artistic accomplishments, Mr. Rodrigue was committed to giving back to his community through charitable and educational efforts; through the George Rodrigue Foundation of the Arts, he raised millions of dollars for post-Katrina New Orleans; and he held annual art contests for high school students that awarded scholarships, art supplies, and other assistance to burgeoning Louisiana artists; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Rodrigue's lifelong contributions to his homestate and to Southern art cannot be overstated; he was commended many times for his singular achievements, including his receipt of an award for outstanding service from the National Art Education Association for his efforts on behalf of arts education and the Ogden Southern Museum of Art's prestigious Opus Award, which is given annually to a member of the arts community whose life's work constitutes a major contribution to the cultural landscape of the South; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Rodrigue was not a native of New Orleans but was an adopted son of the city, where he made a significant impact on the people and culture and where his studio is a treasured landmark in the French Quarter; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Rodrigue's body of work is highly regarded not only in Louisiana but throughout the United States and the world; he is the subject of numerous books that have been published nationally and internationally; his original paintings and silkscreens are displayed in galleries in Carmel, California, and Lafayette and New Orleans, Louisiana; his work is featured in permanent collections throughout the nation, including the George Bush Presidential Library and Museum in Houston and the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.; and he had record-breaking career retrospective exhibitions at the Dixon Gallery and Gardens Museum in Memphis, Tennessee, and the New Orleans Museum of Art; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Rodrigue's work will remain an inspiration for its unique celebration of American life and culture, particularly with respect to the state of Louisiana and the South; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Rodrigue's survivors include his wife, Wendy, and two sons, Jacques and Andre; and

WHEREAS, although the death of George Rodrigue has created a tremendous void, he will always be remembered as a true American master and will continue to be a source of deep pride for all who knew and loved him, especially his family, his friends, and the

people of Louisiana, who will forever cherish him, his work, and his legacy.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express sincere and heartfelt condolences upon the death of George Rodrigue, one of Louisiana's most respected and admired citizens and an internationally renowned artist, and does hereby recognize and record for posterity the special place he holds in the annals of art history in the state of Louisiana and throughout the world.

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

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE