

To express the condolences of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the death of Norma Jane Sabiston on December 4, 2020.

WHEREAS, Norma Jane Sabiston was born in New Orleans, Louisiana on July 20, 1955, the third of five children to Norma Lyttle and Walter “Spec” Sabiston.

WHEREAS, her outgoing and charming personality were evident, early on, as a first grader when she was tapped to deliver notes to the principal’s office because of her self-confidence and positive attitude.

WHEREAS, she went on to excel as a student and student leader, graduating from Abramson Senior High, a large public high school, having been elected Student Body President. In addition to accolades at home, Norma Jane was also recognized as the outstanding delegate at the 1972 statewide Louisiana Youth Seminar. Since that year, she returned every summer as either a counselor, a mentor, an advisor or contributor, to help guide and support hundreds of young leaders attending this leadership program. She went on to graduate from the University of New Orleans with a degree in political science, and again on the lakeside campus where she later in life received the Distinguished Alumna award of the University’s college of Liberal Arts in 2001.

WHEREAS, Norma Jane, known by her friends as NJ, learned the value of leadership and public service as a young woman when her mother served many years as an assistant to New Orleans City Councilman Mike Early, visiting City Hall often after school and watching her mother and the Councilman help countless New Orleans citizens with a variety of problems.

WHEREAS, Norma Jane was one of the first women in Louisiana to rise to positions of influence and impact in a field dominated by men starting her promising career as a staff assistant to then Representative Billy Tauzin in his D.C. office. She then served in a variety of important positions for Senator John Breaux, ultimately serving as his State Director. She then served as Chief of Staff to Senator Mary Landrieu having helped to engineer her historic election to the United States Senate in 1996.

WHEREAS, throughout her service to the state under Senator Landrieu, Norma Jane oversaw the vetting and confirmation process countless federal appointments, shaping a more diverse and representative federal judiciary and justice system.

WHEREAS, through her work for several members of the Louisiana delegation, over a 30-year career, every parish in the state of Louisiana has benefitted from her focus and dedication, helping to bring funding to universities, ports, hospitals and highways, and in helping to build a stronger, more socially just and more economically prosperous state.

WHEREAS, upon returning to New Orleans after an extraordinary career in D.C., Ms. Sabiston started her own consulting firm, Sabiston Consultants, where she represented a variety of clients and became a trusted and informal advisor to Mayor Mitch Landrieu. She led fundraising and development efforts for the 2018 NOLA Foundation and was an integral part of the city of New Orleans' tricentennial celebration planning. Ms. Sabiston volunteered untold hours to

organizations such as the Audubon Commission, the Louisiana Youth Seminar, the *E Pluribus Unum* Institute, the UNO Alumni Association, the New Orleans Recreation Development Foundation, City Year and others too numerous to mention.

WHEREAS, Norma Jane Sabiston served as a trusted advisor to Presidents, Senators, Congressmen, Governors, and Mayors, she often remarked that her most important work and passion was serving as a mentor to hundreds of young staffers and emerging leaders.

WHEREAS, Norma Jane was always enthusiastic and positive, she believed anything was possible through hard work, determination, and teamwork; and

WHEREAS, she was always professional and cordial in her work and relationships, was respected and liked by her political opponents, as well as her political allies in a time of great rancor and partisan division.

WHEREAS, Norma Jane always put Louisiana first and always worked across party lines to move our state and our people forward.

WHEREAS, Norma Jane was always more concerned about getting the job done than getting the credit.

WHEREAS, Norma Jane woke up each day with a million new ideas and actually tried to get them all done and had a way of making all of her friends and colleagues help her accomplish those goals.

WHEREAS, she always felt you should leave it better than you found it – she accomplished this by leaving our Louisiana better, stronger and more inclusive than she found it and thus we are all better for having known her.

WHEREAS, Ms. Sabiston is survived by her mother, Norma Lyttle Sabiston; her sisters, Dottie Grace Belletto, Anita Pollack, and Donna Linares, and her husband Ed; her brother, Walter E. "Sonny" Sabiston, III; and her nieces and nephews and countless friends and colleagues; she will be deeply missed, but her legacy will live on for decades to come.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express heartfelt condolences upon the death of Norma Jane Sabiston and does hereby record Norma Jane's commitment and dedication to public service and to the people of Louisiana whose lives and livelihoods were significantly improved by her hard work, her political acumen and her generous heart.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the family of Norma Jane Sabiston.

