

1 A RESOLUTION adjourning the Senate in honor and loving memory of Gustave
2 Edward LaFontaine Jr.

3 WHEREAS, Gustave Edward LaFontaine Jr. was born on April 10, 1922, in
4 Frankfort, Kentucky. He graduated from Good Shepherd High School and attended
5 Xavier University for one semester; and

6 WHEREAS, in 1943, Gustave LaFontaine was compelled to join the United States
7 Navy to fight during World War II. Serving as a Navy patrol bomber, he was awarded the
8 Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air medal with eight stars, the Presidential Unit
9 Commendation, and numerous other campaign ribbons and awards. Gustave LaFontaine
10 continued in the Naval Air Reserve for 26 years, serving as pilot, bombardier, navigator,
11 and tactical commander. He retired with the rank of Lieutenant Commander. Following
12 the end of World War II, Gustave LaFontaine assisted in the reorganization of the Drum
13 & Bugle Corps, serving as Commander, bugler, drill arranger, and instructor. From the
14 age of 9 through 96, Lieutenant Commander (Ret.) LaFontaine performed "Taps" over
15 the graves of more than 900 deceased veterans; and

16 WHEREAS, Gustave LaFontaine joined Kentucky state government in 1949 as a
17 cartographic draftsman for the Highway Department. In 1952, he transferred to the
18 Department of Aeronautics and became its director in 1975. Under the guidance of
19 Gustave LaFontaine, the Department of Aeronautics developed the first successful State
20 Airport System Plan within the nation and he was awarded the FAA's Silver Certificate
21 for his leadership of the plan. Under his tenure as director, over 60 municipal airports
22 were opened within the Commonwealth; and

23 WHEREAS, Gustave LaFontaine never lost his love of flying. He maintained his
24 pilot's license and accumulated over 6,000 hours in 37 Navy and civil aircraft. In 1979,
25 he purchased his first hot air balloon and began flying them for years to come at many
26 notable local community events; and

27 WHEREAS, Gustave LaFontaine was a member of the National Association of

1 State Aviation Officials and served as a Regional Vice President, the Advisory Board for
2 Eastern Kentucky University's Aviation Program, a lifelong member of Good Shepherd
3 Catholic Church, American Legion Post #7, VFW Post #4075, Knights of Columbus
4 #1483, VPB-111/VP-21 Vets Association, Balloon Society of Kentucky, and the Quiet
5 Birdmen of Louisville. Gustave LaFontaine was a cofounder of the Kentucky Aviation
6 Association and has been enshrined in the Amelia Earhart "Forest of Friendship." He was
7 active in the operation of the Aviation Museum of Kentucky and its Kentucky Aviation
8 Hall of Fame. Gustave LaFontaine will be forever remembered for his advances of the
9 aviation industry of Kentucky through his induction in 2006 into the Kentucky Aviation
10 Hall of Fame; and

11 WHEREAS, Gustave LaFontaine passed away on February 21, 2024, at the age of
12 101. He was preceded in death by his wife, Kathleen Ingram Lowman LaFontaine; two
13 sisters, Margaret C. LaFontaine and Babbette L. Rassenfoss; and four brothers, Charles
14 Whitehead LaFontaine, Oscar Raymond LaFontaine, Maurice A. LaFontaine, and Daniel
15 W. LaFontaine; and

16 WHEREAS, Gustave Edward LaFontaine Jr. is survived by his children, Linda
17 Anne (Bill) Newman, Martha Agnes LaFontaine, Margaret Ingram LaFontaine, and G.
18 Edward (Margaret Rose) LaFontaine, III; brother, Vincent LaFontaine; six grandchildren;
19 and 16 great-grandchildren;

20 NOW, THEREFORE,

21 ***Be it resolved by the Senate of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of***
22 ***Kentucky:***

23 ➔Section 1. The members of the Senate do hereby express their most profound
24 sympathy upon the passing of Gustave Edward LaFontaine Jr.

25 ➔Section 2. When the Senate adjourns this day, it does so in honor and loving
26 memory of Gustave Edward LaFontaine Jr.

27 ➔Section 3. The Clerk of the Senate is directed to transmit a copy of this

- 1 Resolution to Senator Brandon Storm for delivery to the family.