

1 A RESOLUTION adjourning the Senate in honor and loving memory of Minnesota
2 State House Speaker Emerita Melissa Hortman.

3 WHEREAS, Melissa Hortman was born in Fridley, Minnesota, on May 27, 1970;
4 and

5 WHEREAS, from a very young age, Melissa Hortman was drawn to politics and
6 public service, desiring to become a politician at age 10, while closely watching the 1980
7 presidential election; and

8 WHEREAS, Melissa Hortman's commitment to public service persisted throughout
9 college and law school as she obtained a degree in both political science and philosophy
10 from Boston University in 1991, a Juris Doctor from the University of Minnesota in
11 1995, and a Masters of Public Administration from Harvard Kennedy School in 2018;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, Melissa Hortman lived her public and private life in keeping with the
14 phrase, "to whom much is given, much is expected," and she utilized her talents to bring
15 forth major legislation and change while helping and serving others. She served as a Girl
16 Scout leader, worked at her dad's auto parts store, and taught Sunday school at her
17 church. While working as an attorney for Central Minnesota Legal Services, she won a
18 record-setting verdict on behalf of her client against a landlord engaging in housing
19 discrimination; and

20 WHEREAS, after three attempts to serve in the Minnesota legislature, Melissa
21 Hortman was able to secure a seat in the Minnesota House of Representatives during the
22 2004 election. While serving in the Minnesota legislature, she was known as a staunch
23 advocate for environmental and abortion rights, police reform, and gun control policies.
24 She was also active in the areas of transportation, K-12 education funding, higher
25 education, and energy policy. In 2013, she was the chief author of legislation that set
26 Minnesota's solar energy standard; and

27 WHEREAS, during her tenure in the Minnesota legislature, Melissa Hortman rose

1 through the ranks to become Minority Leader and then Speaker of the House in 2019
2 until her untimely death. She would become the longest-serving female speaker in
3 Minnesota history; and

4 WHEREAS, throughout her career Melissa Hortman would be known as a
5 thoughtful, action-oriented, honest, and selfless leader who gave her full commitment to
6 the task at hand. In the words of the current speaker of the Minnesota House of
7 Representatives, Speaker Lisa Demuth, Melissa Hortman was "respected by everyone at
8 the Capitol...she has had a profound impact on this institution and on my own
9 leadership..." Governor Tim Walz called her "a formidable public servant" who would be
10 remembered as a giant. Her colleague, Representative Cheryl Youakim, referred to her as
11 a brilliant negotiator who knew how to build a team and had an innate ability to see a
12 person's skill set and help them grow in their leadership capacity; and

13 WHEREAS, on the morning of June 14, 2025, Melissa Hortman, her husband,
14 Mark, and their golden retriever, Gilbert, were fatally shot in a senseless act of violence
15 in their Brooklyn Park home; and

16 WHEREAS, while her life was tragically cut short, Melissa Hortman's relentless
17 dedication to use her talents to serve others and to protect those who otherwise could not
18 protect themselves, all while exercising tact and grace, will be profoundly missed in both
19 Minnesota and this nation;

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 hereby express their most profound
24 sympathy upon the untimely passing of Minnesota State House Speaker Emerita, Melissa
25 Hortman.

26 ➡Section 2. When the Senate adjourns this day, it does so in honor and in loving
27 memory of Minnesota State House Speaker Emerita, Melissa Hortman, a dedicated

- 1 public servant who gave far beyond what was expected of her.