



**EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER JML 25-036**

***FLAGS AT HALF-STAFF –
FORMER SENATOR J. BENNETT JOHNSTON***

WHEREAS, J. Bennet Johnston, former United States Senator and member of the Louisiana State Senate and Louisiana State House of Representatives, passed away on March 25, 2025, following a lifetime of service to the people of Louisiana;

WHEREAS, he was born in Shreveport on June 10, 1932 to John Bennett Johnston, Sr. and Wilma (Lyon) Johnston;

WHEREAS, he attended West Point, Washington and Lee University, and Louisiana State University Law School;

WHEREAS, he married his wife Mary in 1956 and had four children: J. Bennett Johnston III, Hunter Johnston, Mary Johnston Norriss, and Sally Roemer;

WHEREAS, he served our nation in the Army from 1956 to 1959, serving as a first lieutenant with the Judge Advocate General's Corps in Germany

WHEREAS, he was elected to the Louisiana Legislature in 1963 and served two terms there;

WHEREAS, he was elected to the United States Senate in 1972;

WHEREAS, he served in the United States Senate for 24 years and announced his retirement in 1995;

WHEREAS, he served as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources and was a constant champion of promoting and protecting Louisiana's energy industry;

WHEREAS, he was known for his bipartisan statesmanship, working with members of both major political parties to serve the people of Louisiana;

WHEREAS, in addition to his tremendous work in the energy sector, he also helped drive and expand economic development and other projects across the state, including the construction and expansion of Louisiana interstates, including I-49 and I-10, obtaining millions of dollars to

protect Louisiana wetlands, hundreds of millions of dollars for research at Louisiana State University, and countless other projects across the state;

WHEREAS, he was instrumental establishing two national parks and seven wildlife refuges, including the Jean Lafitte National Park, the Cane River National Historic Park, the New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park, and the Bayou Sauvage Urban National Wildlife Refuge;

WHEREAS, he helped achieve the construction of the Baton Rouge Russell B. Long Federal Building and Courthouse;

WHEREAS, many buildings, plazas, and programs are named in his honor, including the J. Bennett Johnston Red River Waterway, which was a major initiative for him;

WHEREAS, the Washington Post called him “ferocious battler for home state interests;”

WHEREAS, he was a model of bipartisanship by looking past political divides in order to do what was right for the people of Louisiana;

WHEREAS, his principles of good governance will continue to serve as a model for future generations;

WHEREAS, his contributions to the people of Louisiana, whether it was via funding, projects, buildings, parks, or goodwill, are all appreciated by the people of our state;

WHEREAS, he will be remembered for his tireless efforts to support the people of Louisiana through his legislative advocacy;

WHEREAS, his work was well-known and appreciated by those who worked with him, including numerous United States Presidents and United States Senators;

WHEREAS, he was known as a man of action, a father, grandfather, and friend and was described as curious, passionate, strong, and positive;

WHEREAS, he is survived by his wife Mary, his four children: J. Bennett Johnston III and his wife, Justyna Kareta of Mill Valley, CA (Sam Johnston); N. Hunter Johnston and his wife Stephanie Johnston of Washington, D.C. (Hunter, Courtney, and Julia Johnston); Mary Johnston Norriss and her husband, David Norriss of New Orleans, LA (Sarah and Ryan Catallo); and Sally Johnston Roemer and her husband Tim Roemer of Great Falls, VA (Patrick, Matthew, Sarah and Grace Roemer);

WHEREAS, Louisiana owes a debt of gratitude to his many outstanding contributions to our state.


NOW THEREFORE, I, JEFF LANDRY, Governor of the State of Louisiana, by virtue of the authority vested by the Constitution and the laws of the State of Louisiana, do hereby order and direct as follows:

Section 1: As an expression of respect and to honor Senator J. Bennett Johnston, the flags of the United States and the State of Louisiana shall be flown at half-staff over the State Capitol and all state buildings from sunrise until sunset on April 2, 2025.

Section 2: This Order is effective upon signature and shall remain in effect until sunset, April 2, 2025.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have set my hand officially and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of Louisiana in the City of Baton Rouge, on this 31st of March 2025.



Jeff Landry
GOVERNOR OF LOUISIANA

**ATTEST BY THE SECRETARY
OF STATE**



Nancy Landry
SECRETARY OF STATE