



EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER JBE 2023-12

FLAGS AT HALF-STAFF – REPRESENTATIVE DR. CHARLES R. MCDONALD, JR.

- WHEREAS,** Dr. Charles Richard McDonald, Jr., a former distinguished member of the House of Representatives of the Louisiana Legislature and a member of the Louisiana Board of Regents, died on Saturday, August 26, 2023, at the age of 84;
- WHEREAS,** he was preceded in death by his parents, Charles Richard McDonald, Sr., and Leuna Poda McDonald; stepfather, Leon Dyer; wife, Patsy Crain McDonald; and brother, Donnie McDonald; he is survived by his beloved wife Jo Hale McDonald; son, Richard Scott McDonald; two stepchildren, Teri Hale Weber and Trish Hale Botoff; and two grandchildren, Tucker Richard McDonald and McKenzie McDonald-Christensen; step-grandchildren, Scott and Haley Weber; his great-granddaughter, Nora Weber; and his nephew, Donovan McDonald;
- WHEREAS,** born in 1939 in Jackson Parish, he spent most of his childhood in Holly Ridge, Louisiana, graduating from Holly Ridge High School in 1957; he then attended Northeast Louisiana State College (now ULM), graduating in 1961;
- WHEREAS,** after graduating from college, he received a commission as a 2nd Lieutenant in the United States Army, and he served his nation honorably overseas before returning to Louisiana in 1965;
- WHEREAS,** after his return stateside, he began a long and storied career in education, business, and public service, first as a teacher and coach at Oak Grove High School, then serving at several schools in Bastrop; during this time, he continued his education by earning his Master's and Doctoral degrees in Education Administration at ULM, where he served for two decades in both teaching and administrative roles;
- WHEREAS,** in April of 1991, the voters of northeastern Louisiana elected him to the Louisiana House of Representatives, and he served his constituents in that position for sixteen years, reelected without opposition in three straight elections;
- WHEREAS,** as a member of the House of Representatives, Dr. McDonald was a tireless champion for post-secondary education; often regarded as the "Father of TOPS," he served as Chairman of the House Education Committee and played a pivotal role as the lead author of the historic legislation which expanded the Taylor Opportunity Program for Scholars (TOPS), the most significant program of its kind in Louisiana history, which has enabled hundreds of thousands of Louisiana students to attain a higher education;
- WHEREAS,** following his service in the Legislature, Dr. McDonald continued his leadership in his community in several capacities in the private sector, notably including a business partnership that has provided hundreds of all-terrain wheelchairs to customers, many of whom are military veterans;
- WHEREAS,** in 2017, Governor John Bel Edwards appointed Dr. McDonald to the Louisiana Board of Regents, serving all colleges and universities in the State, in which position he shared his wisdom and expertise for the benefit of students in post-secondary education throughout Louisiana;

WHEREAS, in recognition of his lifelong commitment to education and public service, particularly to the ULM community, Dr. McDonald received numerous awards and accolades, including the ULM Golden Arrow Award; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Charles Richard McDonald, Jr., lived a life of tremendous faith, integrity, and honor, and his service as an educator, lawmaker, public servant, and community leader to the State of Louisiana will long be remembered.

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

SECTION 1: As an expression of respect and to honor Dr. Charles Richard McDonald, Jr., 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 Wednesday, August 30, 2023.

SECTION 2: This Order is effective upon signature and shall remain in effect until sunset, August 30, 2023.

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 28th day of August, 2023.

GOVERNOR OF LOUISIANA

**ATTEST BY THE
SECRETARY OF STATE**

SECRETARY OF STATE