



County of Sonoma

State of California

Date: March 28, 2024

Item Number: _____

Resolution Number: _____

☐ 4/5 Vote Required

**Resolution of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Sonoma, State of California,
Recognizing and Honoring the Life and Contributions of Former First District Supervisor Janet
Nicholas**

Whereas, former First District Supervisor Janet Nicholas tragically passed away on February 23, 2024, leaving a great void in the Sonoma community to which she contributed so much; and

Whereas, her loss is particularly felt in the lives of her husband Bob, daughters Kimberly and Laura, grandsons Cole and Conner, sister Judy, brother Clark, and many nieces, nephews, and friends; and

Whereas, Janet Nicholas was born in Denver on January 1st, 1946, and raised in Los Angeles, graduating from UCLA with a triple major in economics, urban design, and political science; and

Whereas, Nicholas moved to Sonoma County in 1969, moving to the Sonoma Valley soon after, and was an economist, a grape grower, and a mother before entering local government, bringing with her an intense focus, collaborative spirit, and an ability to inspire others to do the right thing; and

Whereas, Nicholas was a leader widely recognized for her intelligence, devotion to purposeful policymaking, and sense of humor, and was often characterized as a forceful individual, fearless, appreciative, and compassionate, who was always ready with a deeply-

thought-out brilliant take; and

Whereas, having served on the Sonoma County Planning Commission, Nicholas was elected by the voters of the First District to represent them on the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors in 1984, serving as Chair of the Board in 1989, and spent her time fighting for preservation of agriculture, infrastructure improvements, mental health support for County residents, and intelligent land use policy; and

Whereas, in an often-shared anecdote, she and her husband restuffed fortune cookies during a meal with the state Transportation Commission to read, “Happiness comes to those who fund 1st District Roads”, demonstrating both her sense of humor and passion for infrastructure funding; and

Whereas, Nicholas was an advocate for criminal justice policies and the rehabilitation of prisoners, and was a strong advocate Jail Industries, playing an integral part in Sonoma County establishing these programs during the 1980s; and,

Whereas, colleagues who served alongside her on the Board of Supervisors describe Nicholas as being someone with whom they could work, even if they disagreed; someone who was kind, and smart, and truly cared about the residents of the County she served; and

Whereas, after serving in local government Nicholas moved to statewide positions, first serving as a leading force for crime victims’ rights on the State Board of Prison Terms, then on the State Board of Education, where she championed school choice, charter schools, and academic skill development; and

Whereas, other areas of interest for Nicholas, as described by one of her surviving daughters, were the optics of prisms, the role of agricultural grazing rights on public lands in fire prevention, the long-term implications of short-term fiscal policies, and how to move California and Sonoma County to be better; and

Whereas, when Nicholas was not busy representing her community in our government, she could be found reading, working on her garden, taking a flower arranging class, or painting;

and

Whereas, despite all her accomplishments and skills, her greatest joy in her life was gained from spending time playing with her with grandsons Cole and Connor, and spending time with all her family and friends.

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Sonoma does hereby recognize and honor the outstanding contributions and life of Janet Nicholas and express their hope that her memory will be a comfort to her family and those who loved her.

Supervisors:

Gorin:

Rabbitt:

Gore:

Hopkins:

Coursey:

Ayes:

Noes:

Absent:

Abstain:

So Ordered.