

House Engrossed

Gene Heppard; death resolution

State of Arizona
House of Representatives
Fifty-fifth Legislature
Second Regular Session
2022

HOUSE RESOLUTION 2013

A RESOLUTION

ON THE DEATH OF GENE HEPPARD.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 Gene Heppard, much-beloved community leader, passed away on
2 August 23, 2021, at the age of forty-nine.

3 Born on April 8, 1972, Gene was a pillar in the "disability
4 community" and through his actions helped countless people achieve better
5 lives.

6 Gene was injured in a skiing accident in Colorado in 1993, and the
7 resulting spinal cord injury left him with quadriplegia. Immediately
8 after leaving the rehab hospital, Gene set about finding ways to help
9 others and to advocate for a more inclusive, more accessible community.

10 Gene was well-known for his sense of humor and upbeat demeanor,
11 which made him a popular, persuasive and effective member of the many
12 councils, committees and boards that sought his membership. Among the
13 organizations he was involved with were the Arizona Statewide Independent
14 Living Council, Ability360 and the Arizona Spinal Cord Injury Association.

15 Gene Heppard was also a proud member of the Maricopa County
16 Community College District family for more than twenty-five years, serving
17 fearlessly at the heart of the Disability Resources and Services
18 Department at Phoenix College. As Director of Disability
19 Resources/Services & Veterans Services, Gene helped veterans and students
20 with disabilities access services and resources so they could achieve
21 their dreams. He was always one of the most popular people on campus.

22 Gene would want us all to remember his favorite Irish proverb:
23 "There are good ships and wood ships, ships that sail the sea, but the
24 best ships are friendships, and may they always be!"

25 Gene is survived by his soulmate, Rhonda Haver, his son, Mark, his
26 grandson, Jaxson, his mother and stepfather, Sylvia and Chris Forward, his
27 twin brother, Glen Heppard, and wife, Kelly, his sister, Tammy and
28 husband, Jot Powers, and his six nephews and two nieces. He was proceeded
29 in death by his father, Keith Heppard.

30 Therefore

31 Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of Arizona:

32 That the Members of the House of Representatives sincerely regret
33 the passing of Gene Heppard and extend their most sincere sympathies and
34 condolences to his surviving relatives.