

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 641

WHEREAS, The Senate of the State of Texas is pleased to recognize Walter Umphrey for his outstanding legal career and his lifetime of work as an advocate for those unable to speak for themselves; and

WHEREAS, Walter Umphrey is a native of Port Arthur and a graduate of Baylor Law School, where his mastery of the school's respected Practice Court curriculum presaged a career in which his commitment to equal justice and his thorough knowledge of the law had a profound impact on the lives of people across the state; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Umphrey began his long and distinguished legal career as a prosecutor in the Jefferson County District Attorney's Office; in 1969, he joined with David Provost to create the Provost Umphrey Law Firm, and time and again, on behalf of individuals and their families, he won verdicts and settlements against even the most powerful companies and industries; and

WHEREAS, In 1998, he was named lead counsel for a team of attorneys chosen to represent the State of Texas in its historic suit against the tobacco industry; he was able to engineer the largest civil suit settlement in the nation's history, with the state receiving a \$15.3 billion award and the team of attorneys earning \$3.3 billion in legal fees from the tobacco companies; and

WHEREAS, He has received numerous honors and accolades for his work, including recognition as a Legal Legend by *Texas Lawyer* magazine and inclusion in the Top Texas Lawyers of the 20th Century; he is a longtime member of the Texas Trial Lawyer Association, which granted him Board Emeritus status, and he was named a Fellow of the International Society of Barristers and of the Texas Bar Foundation; and

WHEREAS, Since retiring from the practice of law, Mr. Umphrey has turned his energy and his efforts toward philanthropy, particularly in the field of education; he and his wife, Sheila Umphrey, have been incredibly generous in their support of Baylor Law School and Lamar University, and he donated land to Jefferson County that was used to establish Walter Umphrey State Park; and

WHEREAS, Walter Umphrey has had a profound impact on the legal profession in Texas, and it is truly fitting that he receive special recognition for his career and for his invaluable service on behalf of the men and women of this state; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 86th Legislature, hereby commend Walter Umphrey on his exceptional legal accomplishments and on his extraordinary generosity and extend to him best wishes for continued success in all his endeavors; and, be it further

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RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be prepared for him as an expression of high regard from the Texas Senate.

Watson

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on April 25, 2019.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate