

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 76

In Memory
of
Frances Tarlton "Sissy" Farenthold

WHEREAS, The Senate of the State of Texas honors and commemorates the life of Frances Tarlton "Sissy" Farenthold, who died September 26, 2021, at the age of 94; and

WHEREAS, A legendary activist, educator, and leader for social justice, Sissy Farenthold was born in Corpus Christi on October 2, 1926; she attended Corpus Christi High School and graduated from The Hockaday School; she went on to earn a degree from Vassar College at the age of 19 and a degree from The University of Texas School of Law at the age of 22; and

WHEREAS, Sissy began a long career in public service and civil rights advocacy by accepting a number of appointments to various humanitarian service organizations and commissions; she served as director of Nueces County Legal Aid, and in 1968, she was elected as the only woman to serve in the Texas House of Representatives; she gained widespread support for her sponsorship of the Texas Equal Rights Amendment and for her tireless pursuit of justice during the investigation of the Sharpstown Scandal; and

WHEREAS, Sissy gained national recognition when she was tapped as a potential vice presidential running mate for George McGovern at the 1972 Democratic National Convention and was the first woman whose nomination for the position was brought to a floor vote; she continued a path of trailblazing leadership in her roles as the first chair of the National Women's Political Caucus and as the first woman president of Wells College; she served as a professor at the Thurgood Marshall School of Law, and she taught one of the nation's first classes on sex-based discrimination as a professor at the University of Houston; and

WHEREAS, An esteemed figure in international activism, Sissy was a member of the Helsinki Watch Committee Board of Directors, and she helped lead protests against nuclear proliferation and against apartheid in South Africa; she played a key role in the Third United Nations Conference for Women, and she participated in peace-keeping missions throughout Central America, Asia, and the Middle East; and

WHEREAS, Sissy gave generously of her time and resources to charitable and cultural organizations; the Frances Tarlton "Sissy" Farenthold Endowed Lecture Series in Peace, Social Justice, and Human Rights is presented each year by the Rapoport Center and the Rothko Chapel to honor and reflect on her 60 years of activism and humanitarian service; and

WHEREAS, Sissy married George Edward Farenthold in 1950, and they were blessed with five children; her three grandchildren and three great-grandchildren were a source of pride and joy for her; and

WHEREAS, A truly beloved Texan, Sissy Farenthold was a tireless voice for the vulnerable and underserved, and she was a source of strength to others through her compassion and her work to bring about equal justice for all; she leaves behind a legacy of service that will continue to inspire citizens long into the future; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 87th Legislature, 3rd Called Session, hereby extend sincere condolences to the bereaved family of Frances Tarlton Farenthold; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be prepared for her family as an expression of deepest sympathy from the Texas Senate and that when the Senate adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Sissy Farenthold.

Hinojosa, Whitmire

Alvarado
Blanco
Eckhardt
Gutierrez

Johnson
Lucio
Menéndez

Miles
Powell
West
Zaffirini

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on October 14, 2021, by a rising vote.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate

Member, Texas Senate