

By: Clardy

H.R. No. 165

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Countless lives were touched by the kindness,  
2 generosity, and philanthropic goodwill of Thomas Edward "Ed" Cole,  
3 longtime benefactor of Stephen F. Austin State University, who  
4 passed away on December 5, 2019, at the age of 97; and

5 WHEREAS, Born on July 22, 1922, in Homer, Louisiana, Ed Cole  
6 was the son of Edna and Thomas Edwin Cole, and he grew up in Longview  
7 with the companionship of two sisters, Johnette and Helen, and a  
8 brother, Hiram; he attended welding school, worked at a shipyard in  
9 Beaumont, and eventually joined the United States Air Force, which  
10 deployed him to England during World War II; after being discharged  
11 from military service in 1946, he found a job as a salesman for an  
12 oil field supply company in Longview; his foray into the oil  
13 industry led him to later found his own company, Cole Rental Tools,  
14 in 1958; and

15 WHEREAS, Mr. Cole married the former Gwen Peck, the love of  
16 his life, on February 14, 1966; the couple resided in New Orleans  
17 until relocating to Nacogdoches in 1978; a self-made man and a  
18 successful entrepreneur, Mr. Cole enjoyed giving of his own time  
19 and resources to nurture the growth of the community and the  
20 students at Stephen F. Austin State University; through the years,  
21 he and his wife provided funding for numerous facilities on the  
22 campus, including an art center and a concert hall; they also  
23 endowed scholarships in music, theater, STEM, and basketball to  
24 help finance the education of SFA students; and

1           WHEREAS, Mr. and Mrs. Cole were among the most celebrated  
2 benefactors in SFA's history; the couple were regarded with  
3 tremendous esteem and affection by the Lumberjack community, and in  
4 recognition of Mr. Cole's storied devotion to the university, he  
5 was presented with its prestigious Honorary Doctorate of Humane  
6 Letters in May 2019; his involvement with SFA further included  
7 serving as a trustee for the SFASU Foundation and a member of the  
8 Lumberjacks Booster Club, Friends of Music, and the College of Fine  
9 Arts Dean's Circle of Excellence, and he made frequent appearances  
10 at athletic games and luncheons; he was also engaged in the wider  
11 community as a member of the Nacogdoches Rotary Club and other  
12 organizations; and

13           WHEREAS, Ed Cole left an indelible mark on Nacogdoches  
14 through his altruism and commitment to higher education, and  
15 although he is deeply missed, the contributions that he made over  
16 the course of his extraordinary life will continue to resonate long  
17 into the future; now, therefore, be it

18           RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 87th Texas  
19 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the memory of Thomas Edward Cole  
20 and extend sincere sympathy to his loved ones; and, be it further

21           RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
22 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of  
23 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Thomas  
24 Edward Cole.