

By: Stucky

H.R. No. 1297

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Denton County lost a trailblazing civic leader with
2 the passing of former county judge Mary O. Horn on April 21, 2023,
3 at the age of 77; and

4 WHEREAS, The daughter of Lieutenant Commander
5 Dr. O. W. Roberts and Mary Ann Roberts, the former Mary Roberts was
6 born in Owatonna, Minnesota, on June 28, 1945; after studying at
7 Mankato State College and earning certification from the Minnesota
8 School of Business, she began working for Braniff International
9 Airways in Dallas as a flight attendant; she rose to become the only
10 woman among the top executives at the airline before starting her
11 own business in 1982; and

12 WHEREAS, On May 6, 1967, she married James Nathan "Jim" Horn,
13 and they settled in Denton, where they raised two children,
14 Jennifer and Jim; the couple founded the Denton County Republican
15 Party at their kitchen table in 1972, and Judge Horn campaigned
16 energetically for her husband in his successful campaign for a seat
17 in the Texas House of Representatives; in 1993, she became the first
18 woman to win election as Denton County tax assessor-collector, and
19 nine years later, she became the county's first female judge;
20 during an era of phenomenal growth, she worked tirelessly to
21 maintain a low tax rate while improving efficiency and providing a
22 high level of service to residents; she increased budget reserves,
23 paving the way for a AAA bond rating, modernized the county's taxing
24 systems, and made motor vehicle registration more convenient by

1 creating an online system; in 2004 and 2008, voters approved two
2 bond packages, and she leveraged \$335 million in local funds to
3 bring over \$3 billion for road improvements and construction,
4 expansion, or renovation of county buildings; she retired in 2018,
5 following four consecutive terms, as the longest-serving county
6 judge in Denton County history; and

7 WHEREAS, Judge Horn shared her expertise in leadership roles
8 with a host of local and state organizations, and she was vice chair
9 of the Texas Workforce Development Board; she served many terms as
10 president of the Denton Republican Women's Club, and she was the
11 Texas Federation of Republican Women's 1988 honoree; and

12 WHEREAS, Above all, Judge Horn was devoted to her family,
13 which grew to include eight grandchildren, Michael, Elle, Knox,
14 Francie, Houston, Olive, Morgan, and Ashton; her greatest joy was
15 spending time with them, whether attending their athletic events or
16 reading stories, singing songs, and making up silly games; and

17 WHEREAS, Mary Horn broke down barriers and skillfully guided
18 Denton County during a transformative period, and although she will
19 be deeply missed, her exceptional contributions will continue to
20 resonate in the years to come; now, therefore, be it

21 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 88th Texas
22 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the memory of the Honorable Mary
23 O. Horn and extend sincere sympathy to all who mourn her passing;
24 and, be it further

25 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
26 prepared for her family and that when the Texas House of
27 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Mary Horn.