

By: Eckhardt, Campbell

S.R. No. 490

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The State of Texas lost an admired educator and
2 demographer with the passing of former U.S. Census Bureau director
3 Steven Harold Murdock on April 7, 2023, at the age of 74; and

4 WHEREAS, The son of Lois and Raymond Murdock, Steve Murdock
5 was born in Fergus Falls, Minnesota, on June 2, 1948; after
6 graduating from North Dakota State University, he went on to earn
7 his doctoral degree in demography and sociology from the University
8 of Kentucky; he taught for a quarter century at Texas A&M
9 University, where he held a Regents Chair; for a decade, he held the
10 Lutcher Brown Distinguished Chair in Demography and Organization
11 Studies at The University of Texas at San Antonio; in 2007, he
12 joined Rice University as the Allyn and Gladys Cline Chair in
13 Sociology, and he became the founding director of Rice's Hobby
14 Center for the Study of Texas; he was the author of dozens of books
15 and nearly 50 academic journal articles, and he was a caring mentor
16 to his Ph.D. students; and

17 WHEREAS, Dr. Murdock originated and institutionalized the
18 position of Texas state demographer; for more than 25 years, he
19 guided the Texas State Data Center and Texas Population Estimates
20 and Projections Program, taking a leadership role in the state's
21 efforts in the 1980, 1990, and 2000 decennial censuses; he also made
22 approximately 50 to 60 presentations each year on the changing size
23 and distribution of the state's population at the request of groups
24 such as legislators, school superintendents, and fellow academics;

1 President George W. Bush nominated him as director of the U.S.
2 Census Bureau in 2007, and his dedication to public service led him
3 to accept, even though the job would last only a year until the next
4 administration; he is credited with being the steady hand that kept
5 the 2010 Census on course during a period of transition; and

6 WHEREAS, Among numerous honors, Dr. Murdock received the
7 Distinguished Alumni Award from North Dakota State University, the
8 Faculty Distinguished Research Award from Texas A&M, and both the
9 Distinguished Rural Sociologist and Excellence in Research Awards
10 from the Rural Sociological Society; in 2005, he was named one of
11 the 25 Most Influential Texans by *Texas Monthly*; and

12 WHEREAS, Although Steve Murdock will be deeply missed, he
13 left behind a legacy of scholarship and service that will be
14 remembered and admired for years to come; now, therefore, be it

15 RESOLVED, That the Senate of the 88th Texas Legislature
16 hereby pay tribute to the life of Steven Harold Murdock and extend
17 sincere condolences to the members of his family: to his wife, Mary
18 Zey; to his stepson, James Collins Ferrell; to his grandson, George
19 Collins Ferrell; to his sister, Joann Lonbaken, and her husband,
20 Roger, and his brother, Lee Murdock, and his wife, June; and to his
21 other relatives and friends; and, be it further

22 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
23 prepared for his family and that when the Texas Senate adjourns this
24 day, it do so in memory of Steve Murdock.