

By: Eckhardt

S.R. No. 521

SENATE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The Senate of the State of Texas honors and commemorates the remarkable life of Jerry Donald Cook, who died on January 7, 2023, at the age of 83; and

WHEREAS, Don Cook was born in 1939 in Dallas, and from an early age, he possessed a passion for serving others and a great appreciation for nature and the outdoors; he achieved the prestigious rank of Eagle Scout as a youth, and he graduated from Polytechnic High School in Fort Worth in 1958 before earning a degree in economics from Texas A&M University; he went on to later earn master's degrees in public administration from American University in Washington, D.C., and from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government; and

WHEREAS, Inspired as a young man by President Kennedy's famous call to service in the name of country, Don accepted a position with the United States Employment Service office and later worked for NASA and the Peace Corps before serving with the Environmental Protection Agency; Don joined the District of Columbia National Guard in 1963, and his calm disposition and reflective nature were an asset to him during his training as a fighter pilot; and

WHEREAS, Don was called to serve during the Pueblo crisis in 1968 and spent a year serving as a fighter pilot in South Korea, where he flew an F-100 jet; after returning from his

military service abroad, he continued serving in the D.C. National Guard for nine years, and he later served for nearly a decade in the Texas State Guard before retiring as a lieutenant colonel; in the 1970s, Don continued to devote himself to public service as an intern in the office of United States Democratic Representative J. J. "Jake" Pickle; and

WHEREAS, In 1989, Don retired from the Environmental Protection Agency and returned to Texas, where he worked for the General Land Office in Austin and later served as a cancer educator with The University of Texas MD Anderson Health Science Center in Smithville; in addition to his professional endeavors, Don was active in numerous charitable and community organizations, including the Rotary Club of Austin and Capital City Village, and he volunteered as a Boy Scout troop leader and served on a number of environmental and educational committees; and

WHEREAS, Don was a devoted husband to Peggy Pickle, his wife of 33 years, and he was a loving father to his daughters, Kelly Cook Newman and Rebecca Cook Wallace, and to his stepdaughter, Bergan Casey; he was blessed with five grandchildren, who enriched his life immeasurably; and

WHEREAS, Don gave generously of his energy, time, and talents to help others throughout his life, and he was firm in his convictions and ideals as a lifelong Democrat and environmentalist; above all, he cherished his family, and he was a source of strength and inspiration in the lives of those who knew him; he leaves a legacy of service and achievement that sets

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a shining example for others to follow, and his memory will be forever treasured by his loving family members and by all who were privileged to share in his life; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 88th Legislature, hereby extend sincere condolences to the bereaved family of Jerry Donald Cook; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be prepared for his 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 Don Cook.