

By: Zaffirini, et al.

S.R. No. 630

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The passing of former Texas State Representative and
2 Senator James William Haley of Austin on July 3, 2022, at the age of
3 78, brought a great loss to his family and many friends; and

4 WHEREAS, Born in Center on September 22, 1943, Bill Haley was
5 the son of Eugene Wayne "Pete" Haley Sr. and Mary Elizabeth Miller
6 Haley, and he grew up with the company of his brothers, Eugene and
7 Thomas; he graduated from Texas Christian University and went on to
8 earn his teaching certificate at Stephen F. Austin State University
9 and a master's degree at Texas State University; during a career in
10 public education that spanned more than a dozen years in Houston and
11 then Center, he taught government, American history, and economics
12 courses, making the subjects fun and interesting while encouraging
13 students to excel; and

14 WHEREAS, Mr. Haley won a special election for a seat in the
15 Texas House of Representatives in 1978, and he took a leading role
16 in enacting sweeping education reforms; widely acknowledged as the
17 most vigorous in the nation at the time, the changes limited class
18 size, set standards for student performance and teacher competency,
19 and raised educator pay rates; he served as chair of the House
20 Public Education Committee, as well as subcommittees on Public
21 Education Appropriative Matters and Budget and Oversight; in
22 addition, he was a member of several other committees, among them
23 State Affairs and Financial Institutions; and

24 WHEREAS, Following his election to the Texas Senate in 1988,

1 he remained an ardent champion of education, earning the nickname
2 "East Texas Maverick" from writer Molly Ivins for both his East
3 Texas drawl and his tenacity; Senator Haley co-chaired the Interim
4 Committee on Proprietary Schools, chaired the Interim Committee on
5 Education, and served as vice chair of the Senate Education
6 Committee and chair of the Special Committee on Administration;
7 throughout his tenure in public office, he was known for both his
8 keen insight and his wit; in one of his better-known jests, he
9 offered a tongue-in-cheek bill amendment to route an intercity
10 bullet train through his hometown, with its population of 6,000, a
11 tactic that earned a whimsical "Best Boondoggle" award from *Texas*
12 *Monthly*; the recipient of numerous more serious accolades, he was
13 accorded the Friend of Education Award by the Texas Classroom
14 Teachers Association and Champion of Education Award by the Texas
15 Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association, among many
16 others; and

17 WHEREAS, Senator Haley returned to private life in 1995; a
18 valued member of University Christian Church, he served in various
19 leadership roles, including elder and chair of the board, and he
20 enjoyed teaching the Seekers church school class for 23 years;
21 dedicated to his alma mater, he was active on the board of the
22 Austin Chapter of the TCU Alumni Association, and he was a member of
23 the Austin Regional Council, the National Alumni Board, and the
24 executive board of the TCU College of Fine Arts Board of Visitors;
25 and

26 WHEREAS, In all his endeavors, Senator Haley enjoyed the love
27 and support of his wife, Mary, and the couple formed a strong team,

1 having known each other since childhood; he took great pride in his
2 sons, Jeffrey and Robert, and he had the pleasure of seeing his
3 family grow to include five grandchildren; and

4 WHEREAS, Through his unyielding commitment to education,
5 Bill Haley made significant contributions to his fellow Texans, and
6 his warmth, kindness, and sense of humor enriched the lives of all
7 who were privileged to know him; now, therefore, be it

8 RESOLVED, That the Senate of the 88th Texas Legislature
9 hereby pay tribute to the memory of the Honorable James William
10 Haley and extend sincere condolences to the members of his family:
11 to his wife, Mary Russell Scriven Haley; to his sons, Jeffrey
12 Russell Haley and his wife Michele, and Robert Colin Haley and his
13 wife, Lisa Marie; to his grandchildren, William Russell Haley,
14 Jonathan Michael Haley, Andrew Christopher Haley, Ava Brooke Haley,
15 and Alexis Giuliana Haley; to his brother, Thomas Laurence Haley,
16 and his wife, Michelle; and to his other relatives and many friends;
17 and, be it further

18 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
19 prepared for his family and that when the Texas Senate adjourns this
20 day, it do so in memory of former State Senator Bill Haley.