

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 628

In Memory
of
James Pitts

WHEREAS, The State of Texas lost an esteemed legislator and dear friend to many with the passing of longtime state representative James R. Pitts of Waxahachie on July 20, 2024, at the age of 77; and

WHEREAS, Born to Agnes and Roy Pitts in Dallas on January 1, 1947, Jim Pitts grew up with an older sister, Rosemary, and identical twin, John; he completed his undergraduate and master's degrees in business administration at Southern Methodist University and earned his law degree from SMU as well; on May 22, 1971, he married the former Evelyn Eastham, and they settled in her hometown, Waxahachie; they were blessed with two daughters, Duffy and Ashley, and a son, Ryan; the couple shared a fulfilling relationship until the untimely death of Mrs. Pitts in 2004; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Pitts was employed as an associate at the law office of Lynn G. Griffith before opening his own firm in 1984; in addition, he owned Ellis County Title Company and served as board chair and legal counsel; he continued to practice law until shortly before his passing; and

WHEREAS, Early in his career, Mr. Pitts joined the Waxahachie Lions Club and Waxahachie Chamber of Commerce; he went on to serve on the chamber's board and became its president in 1991; over the years, he gave generously of his time and talents in numerous other leadership roles, including as director of the Nicholas P. Sims Library and as president of the Baylor Scott & White Medical Board and the Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services board; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Pitts made his first foray into politics in 1978, winning a seat on the board of the Waxahachie Independent School District, and he ultimately served as a trustee for 14 years and held the office of president; elected to the Texas House in 1992, he set a high standard of constituent services; he made himself readily available to area citizens, sought their involvement in problem-solving, and facilitated their access to government services; deeply committed to public education, he kept in close contact with school superintendents; and

WHEREAS, Highly regarded for his wisdom and fairness, as well as his financial expertise and commitment to fiscal responsibility, Mr. Pitts was appointed to the House Appropriations Committee; as its chair, he helped guide the budget setting process for nearly a decade; he was also chair of a number of appropriations subcommittees, and he served on a range of other committees; an active champion for his district, he was instrumental in such projects as widening the U.S. Highway 287 bypass, renovating the famed Ellis County Courthouse, and rebuilding the historic Hill County Courthouse after a fire; among numerous accolades, he was named three times to the *Texas Monthly* list of the state's 10 best legislators; the magazine called him "one of the truly great lawmakers of his era"; and

WHEREAS, Following 11 terms in office, Mr. Pitts retired from the legislature, but his successors continued to seek his counsel on the appropriations process; he further contributed to public policy discussions as the founder of Jim Pitts Consulting;

while working tirelessly for the betterment of the Lone Star State, he always found time for his treasured family; he enthusiastically supported his children's and grandchildren's many activities and enjoyed spending time with them at Cedar Creek Lake and in Park City, Utah; his kind, engaging personality brought him a multitude of friends all across Texas, and he never missed a chance to plan a party and treat guests to a bountiful table of delicious food; and

WHEREAS, Jim Pitts made a lasting, positive difference through his legislative achievements and wide-ranging civic endeavors, and although he is greatly missed by all who were privileged to know him, his statesmanship and profound devotion to public service will remain a source of inspiration for years to come; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 89th Legislature, hereby pay tribute to the memory of the Honorable James R. Pitts and extend sincere condolences to the members of his family: to his children, Duffy Bloemendal and her husband, Scott, Ashley Pitts, and James Ryan Pitts and his wife, Faith Anne; to his grandchildren, Jackson, Owen, Will, Margaret, Evelyn, and James Reagan; to his brother, John Robert Pitts and his wife, Mary Bain; and to his many other relatives and host of friends; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this Resolution be prepared for his family and that when the Texas Senate adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Jim Pitts.

Hughes

Alvarado	Hall	Menéndez
Birdwell	Hancock	Miles
Blanco	Hinojosa of Hidalgo	Parker
Creighton	Hinojosa of Nueces	Paxton
Gutierrez	King	Perry
	Kolkhorst	

Patrick, President of the Senate

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on May 31, 2025, by a rising vote.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate