

By: Swinford

H.R. No. 138

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, For exceptional achievement in the field of  
2 aviation, Shelby M. Kritser of Amarillo is being inducted into the  
3 Distinguished Flying Corps Hall of Fame by the Texas Aviation  
4 Historical Society on May 31, 2004; and

5           WHEREAS, Mr. Kritser was born in Amarillo on May 19, 1914, the  
6 son of a pioneer Panhandle family; he graduated as valedictorian of  
7 Texas Military Institute in San Antonio in 1931, received a degree  
8 in mechanical engineering from The University of Texas in 1935, and  
9 graduated from the Harvard Graduate School of Business  
10 Administration in 1937; and

11           WHEREAS, If there had ever been a question whether he would  
12 take to aviation, it seems to have been settled at the age of 18 when  
13 he received his first flying lesson: two weeks later he purchased  
14 his first airplane, and a few days after that he soloed for the  
15 first time, having had six hours and 20 minutes' worth of  
16 instruction; after completing school he joined Pan American Airways  
17 and served on the Bermuda/United States route before being assigned  
18 to the famous Yankee Clipper; and

19           WHEREAS, Mr. Kritser returned to Amarillo in 1941 and opened  
20 a maintenance shop and aircraft sales department at English Field;  
21 in 1945 he formed a corporation with friends and launched the  
22 construction of Tradewind Airport for the use of private pilots and  
23 traveling businessmen; less than a year after the airport opened  
24 for business, it received the prestigious Haire Airport Award for

1 "outstanding achievement for nonscheduled operations"; and

2 WHEREAS, Continuing to develop his skills as a pilot, Mr.  
3 Kritser earned the Federal Aviation Agency's Air Transport Rating,  
4 the most advanced license issued at the time; he flew planes ranging  
5 from 45-horsepower Piper Cubs to multiengine aircraft and  
6 maintained membership in virtually every aviation organization in  
7 the country, including the National Aeronautics Association and the  
8 Silver Wings Association; and

9 WHEREAS, In addition to his work with Tradewind Airport, Mr.  
10 Kritser devoted his energies to his ranch, a 122,000-acre spread on  
11 the north bank of the Canadian River, and to his duties at the  
12 *Amarillo Globe-News*, where he started in 1949 and for which he was  
13 made vice president and general manager in 1952; and

14 WHEREAS, This distinguished gentleman also compiled a  
15 notable record of public service; Governors Price Daniel and John  
16 Connally each appointed him to a term on the Texas Aeronautics  
17 Board, and in 1964 he was named chairman of the Texas Aeronautics  
18 Commission; highly regarded for his capable leadership, he received  
19 appointments to the Texas Game and Fish Commission and Texas  
20 Tourist Commission; and

21 WHEREAS, Mr. Kritser gave generously of his time and talents  
22 to the Amarillo community, serving on many boards concerned with  
23 projects of civic betterment and, with his wife, lending  
24 substantial support to the cultural life of the city; and

25 WHEREAS, Shelby Kritser died on April 13, 1966, at the age of  
26 52, in the crash of a stunt plane during Amarillo's Aviation Day;  
27 and

1           WHEREAS, It is altogether fitting that Shelby M. Kritser be  
2 recognized for his eminent contributions to aviation in the State  
3 of Texas and that a chronicle of those contributions be preserved at  
4 the English Field Air & Space Museum for this and future  
5 generations; now, therefore, be it

6           RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 78th Texas  
7 Legislature, 4th Called Session, hereby pay special tribute to the  
8 memory of Shelby M. Kritser on the occasion of his induction into  
9 the Distinguished Flying Corps Hall of Fame by the Texas Aviation  
10 Historical Association; and, be it further

11           RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
12 prepared for the members of his family as an expression of high  
13 regard by the Texas House of Representatives.