

By: Ritter

H.R. No. 128

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The passing of John Ellis Gray of Beaumont on March
2 20, 2002, brought great sorrow to the family, friends, and
3 community of this esteemed gentleman; and

4 WHEREAS, A native Texan, Mr. Gray was born March 3, 1907, in
5 Buckeye; the family moved to Beaumont, where his parents, John and
6 Millie Gray, raised rice and dairy cattle; and

7 WHEREAS, It was his sophomore year at South Park High School
8 that Mr. Gray met the love of his life, Mary Hahn; after graduating
9 as valedictorian, he enrolled in South Park Junior College, which
10 would grow to become Lamar University, and was the top male graduate
11 in the college's first graduating class; and

12 WHEREAS, After earning a B.A. in government and an M.A. in
13 educational administration from The University of Texas, Mr. Gray
14 became athletic director of Lamar College, was named dean of men by
15 the age of 33, and five years later became president; he championed
16 the efforts to make the school a four-year, state-supported
17 institution and saw his dream realized in September 1951; and

18 WHEREAS, Mr. Gray left Lamar University to pursue a career in
19 banking and rose to the position of president at First Security
20 National Bank of Beaumont and became its chief executive officer
21 and chairman of the board; and

22 WHEREAS, Years later, the needs of his beloved Lamar
23 University brought him out of retirement to serve a second term as
24 president; upon his departure in 1977, the school regents named him

1 president emeritus and dedicated three campus buildings in his
2 honor; and

3 WHEREAS, Widely known and respected, this esteemed gentleman
4 was a living legend of Lamar University; those who had the privilege
5 of knowing him will not soon forget the gentle and generous spirit
6 of John Gray, who loved his family, his community, and his alma
7 mater; now, therefore, be it

8 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 78th Texas
9 Legislature hereby honor the life and contributions of John Ellis
10 Gray and extend sincere sympathy to the family and many friends of
11 this gracious gentleman; and, be it further

12 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
13 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of
14 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of John Ellis
15 Gray.