

By: Goolsby

H.R. No. 593

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, In the spring of 1969, children attending schools on
2 either side of Interstate Highway 635 in north Dallas County were
3 endangering themselves and motorists when using an elevated,
4 uncovered pedestrian walkway to cross the interstate on their way
5 to and from school; and

6 WHEREAS, Some children were dropping schoolbooks, lunch
7 boxes, and other objects over the walkway's edge and onto motorists
8 using the highway that runs beneath the walkway; other children
9 were walking its narrow, unprotected ledges and even dangling
10 themselves and others over its sides; and

11 WHEREAS, Concerned parents, parent-teacher associations, and
12 neighborhood groups had been concerned about this hazard for some
13 time but were frustrated and angry because they had been unable to
14 get any positive response or action from state or federal officials
15 to address this dangerous situation; and

16 WHEREAS, After reading a newspaper story that highlighted the
17 dangers posed by the walkway, State Representative Joe Ratcliff, a
18 member of the Texas House of Representatives in the 57th, 60th, and
19 61st legislatures, promptly investigated the situation; and

20 WHEREAS, Representative Ratcliff contacted the officials and
21 agencies having jurisdiction over IH-635 and the walkway; he met
22 with local law enforcement and safety departments and affected
23 parents and school groups and promised all who were concerned that
24 the problem would be fixed; and

1 WHEREAS, Representative Ratcliff vowed to pass legislation
2 directing that the walkway be covered to protect the children,
3 prompting the agency to cover the walkway and all others in the
4 state, especially those used by children; and

5 WHEREAS, The simple, heartfelt actions taken by Mr. Ratcliff
6 more than 30 years ago led to the addition of significant safety
7 features that today continue to ensure the safety of the children
8 using that walkway and others across the state and of motorists on
9 IH-635 and other Texas roads; his contribution to the well-being of
10 Texans everywhere truly merits appropriate public recognition;
11 now, therefore, be it

12 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 78th Texas
13 Legislature hereby request the Texas Department of Transportation
14 to designate the pedestrian walkway that crosses IH-635 and
15 connects the city of Farmers Branch to the city of Dallas as the Joe
16 Ratcliff Walkway; and, be it further

17 RESOLVED, That the secretary of state forward an official
18 copy of this resolution to the executive director of the Texas
19 Department of Transportation.