

By: Wilson

H.R. No. 1486

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The Right Reverend Claude Edward Payne, bishop of
2 the Episcopal Diocese of Texas, is retiring in June 2003 after
3 guiding the church in that diocese through a period of remarkable
4 growth; and

5 WHEREAS, Bishop Payne was consecrated as bishop coadjutor of
6 the 57-county diocese in October 1993 and installed as diocesan
7 bishop in February 1995; during his tenure, average attendance at
8 Sunday services, total congregational income, and donations to the
9 diocesan outreach budget have all increased markedly; local lay
10 vicars have been raised up to serve small rural congregations, new
11 churches have been formed, and a number of established churches and
12 other church institutions have undergone dramatic expansion; and

13 WHEREAS, Under Bishop Payne's leadership, the effervescence
14 within the church in the diocese has been reflected in the
15 appointment of the first female canon to the ordinary and the
16 selection of the first African Americans as bishop suffragan,
17 assistant bishop, and diocesan youth missionary; and

18 WHEREAS, While working to build and strengthen the church,
19 Bishop Payne has also sought to shift its focus outward to serve the
20 unchurched and the wider community; as part of this endeavor,
21 social service programs in Houston, Beaumont, Galveston, and Austin
22 are rendering crucial assistance to homeless and impoverished
23 citizens in those communities; and

24 WHEREAS, Bishop Payne has also played an instrumental role in

1 establishing Episcopal Health Charities (EHC), which has assisted
2 community outreach programs with approximately \$50 million since
3 1997; 63 percent of EHC grants support programs beyond the diocesan
4 congregations, such as a fully equipped mobile health clinic for
5 homeless youth in Houston; and

6 WHEREAS, Born in Abilene, this distinguished Texan received a
7 degree in chemical engineering from Rice University and master's
8 and doctor of divinity degrees from the Church Divinity School of
9 the Pacific; before his election as bishop in 1993, he served for 25
10 years at St. Mark's in Beaumont and St. Martin's in Houston; and

11 WHEREAS, Through his exceptional vision, untiring
12 commitment, and skillful leadership, Bishop Payne has contributed
13 immeasurably to the vigor of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of
14 Texas and guided the church in vital service to the community at
15 large; now, therefore, be it

16 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 78th Texas
17 Legislature hereby honor the Right Reverend Claude Edward Payne as
18 he prepares to retire as bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Texas
19 and extend to him sincere appreciation for the energy, time, and
20 concern he has devoted to the citizens of this state.