

By: Jones of Dallas

H.R. No. 354

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The Honorable Paul B. Ragsdale of Dallas, who served
2 in the Texas House of Representatives from 1973 to 1986, has
3 rendered exceptional service to the people of Texas; and

4 WHEREAS, One of the first African Americans to be elected to
5 the Texas Legislature following the end of Reconstruction, a
6 century before, Mr. Ragsdale represented District 110, which
7 encompassed Oak Cliff/South Dallas in Dallas County; though only 28
8 years old during his freshman term, he quickly became a
9 knowledgeable and effective legislator, working with members
10 across the political spectrum; and

11 WHEREAS, Committed to advancing minority participation in
12 politics and government, Mr. Ragsdale sponsored legislation
13 relating to single-member districts for the boards of the Dallas
14 Independent School District and the Dallas County Community College
15 District; he also endeavored to establish single-member districts
16 for the Dallas City Council and the creation in Dallas of justice of
17 the peace and constable precincts in which minorities could be
18 elected; and

19 WHEREAS, During his first term, he sought to establish a
20 statewide human relations commission and a strong commission to
21 oversee public utilities; in addition, he began pressing state
22 agencies to increase their hiring of minorities and women, and he
23 won approval for the establishment of a state equal employment
24 opportunity office; and

1 WHEREAS, Among the achievements in which he took particular
2 pride was the passage of legislation limiting the size of
3 kindergarten through second-grade classes to 22 students, down from
4 the earlier recommended limit of 30 children per class; and

5 WHEREAS, Mr. Ragsdale's committee assignments included
6 public education and regions, compacts, and districts, in addition
7 to the state, federal, and international relations committee, which
8 he chaired; he also served as chair of the Texas Legislative Black
9 Caucus; and

10 WHEREAS, Following the end of the 1973 regular session, Paul
11 Ragsdale became the moving force behind the East Texas Project, a
12 series of lawsuits seeking the reapportionment of county
13 commissioner precincts in 48 East Texas counties; he created a
14 special projects committee to pursue that litigation, as well as to
15 promote black business enterprise and various community causes; and

16 WHEREAS, Born on January 14, 1945, Mr. Ragsdale was raised
17 near Jacksonville and earned a bachelor's degree in sociology from
18 The University of Texas at Austin; afterward he moved to Tarrant
19 County and worked as an analyst for the Dallas Crossroads Community
20 Center, now the Martin Luther King, Jr., Center, before resigning
21 to run for the legislature in 1972; and

22 WHEREAS, Through his legislative skill and his profound
23 commitment to addressing the problems of poor and minority
24 citizens, Paul Ragsdale has contributed significantly to building a
25 stronger, more just society in the Lone Star State; now, therefore,
26 be it

27 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 79th Texas

1 Legislature, 1st Called Session, hereby commend the Honorable Paul
2 B. Ragsdale for his outstanding legislative and civic service and
3 extend to him sincere appreciation for his spirited and steadfast
4 efforts over the years; and, be it further

5 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
6 prepared for Mr. Ragsdale as an expression of high regard by the
7 Texas House of Representatives.