

By: Woolley

H.R. No. 31

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The death of Richard J. V. Johnson of Houston on
2 January 14, 2006, at the age of 75, has brought a great loss to his
3 family and to the many friends and admirers of this distinguished
4 Texas newsman; and

5 WHEREAS, Born on September 22, 1930, in San Luis Potosi,
6 Mexico, Mr. Johnson moved with his family to the United States at
7 the age of seven and settled in Houston; a gifted athlete at San
8 Jacinto High School, he enrolled at Texas A&M University in 1948
9 with a basketball scholarship; the following year, he transferred
10 to The University of Texas at Austin, where he was voted an
11 outstanding athlete; after graduating from UT, he served two years
12 in the U.S. Army; and

13 WHEREAS, In 1955, Mr. Johnson joined the Texas Daily
14 Newspaper Association as an assistant to the executive director;
15 the next year, he began his outstanding career at the *Houston*
16 *Chronicle*, working his way up from copywriter in the promotion
17 department to director of sales and marketing to executive vice
18 president; in 1973, he became the youngest president of a major
19 daily newspaper in the United States; after the *Chronicle* was sold
20 to the Hearst Corporation in 1987, he served as the newspaper's
21 chair and publisher until his retirement in 2002; and

22 WHEREAS, Mr. Johnson shared his talents with others in his
23 profession through his service as director of the Houston Chapter
24 of the American Marketing Association, the National Newspaper

1 Promotion Association, and the Houston Advertising Club; the
2 president and chair of the American Newspaper Publishers
3 Association and the executive committee of the Texas Daily
4 Newspaper Association, he received the Pat Taggart Newspaper Leader
5 of the Year Award and the Houston Advertising Federation's Silver
6 Medal and Trailblazer Award; and

7 WHEREAS, In addition to his myriad professional
8 contributions, Mr. Johnson had a record of public service that
9 included service on the board of trustees of the Texas Medical
10 Center and the board of visitors of The University of Texas M. D.
11 Anderson Cancer Center; he also distinguished himself as a director
12 of the State Fair of Texas, the Robert A. Welch Foundation, Texas
13 Taxpayers Research, and Mutual Insurance Company, Limited, which he
14 further served as chair and chief executive officer; and

15 WHEREAS, Equally impressive was his voluminous list of
16 accolades, which included awards from the Sam Houston Area Boy
17 Scouts of America, the National Conference of Christians and Jews
18 Brotherhood, the B'nai Brith Anti-Defamation League, the Rotary
19 Club of Houston, the American Diabetes Association, the Texas
20 Society to Prevent Blindness, and The University of Texas
21 Ex-Students' Association; and

22 WHEREAS, Richard Johnson made the most of his time in this
23 life, and he leaves behind a legacy of professional achievement and
24 civic engagement that will undoubtedly continue to inspire others
25 for many years to come; now, therefore, be it

26 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 79th Texas
27 Legislature, 3rd Called Session, hereby pay tribute to the life of

1 Richard J. V. Johnson and extend sincere sympathy to the members of
2 his family: to his wife of 50 years, Belle Griggs Johnson; to his
3 daughter, Shelley Gottschalk and her husband, Art; to his son, Mark
4 Johnson and his wife, Laura; to his grandchildren, Paige, Morgan,
5 and Cameron; to his sister, Bette Burkett and her husband, Jeff; to
6 his nephews, Brian James, Clark James, and Bill Hodge; to his
7 sister-in-law, Gloria Hodge; and to his other relatives and
8 friends; and, be it further

9 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
10 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of
11 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Richard J.
12 V. Johnson.