

By: Turner

H.R. No. 809

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, With the close of the 79th Session, the Honorable Al
2 Edwards will be ending his service in the Texas Legislature, having
3 represented his Houston area constituents, and in fact all Texans,
4 with integrity and distinction for 28 years; and

5 WHEREAS, A veteran of the civil rights movement who
6 collaborated with Dr. Martin Luther King, the Rev. Jesse Jackson,
7 and other leaders, Mr. Edwards has worked diligently to protect the
8 gains won in that era and to honor the contributions made by African
9 Americans and other minorities in Texas; in 1979, his first year of
10 legislative service, he sponsored the bill that made June 19 a state
11 holiday that commemorates Juneteenth--the date in 1865 when slaves
12 in Texas were first notified of their emancipation--and has also
13 carried out several non-legislative activities in support of this
14 event; moreover, Representative Edwards has been an important
15 leader among the state's African American lawmakers, serving as
16 chairman of the Texas Legislative Black Caucus from 1991 to 1997;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, This veteran representative has been a key player on
19 a number of important committees during his tenure; during the 79th
20 Legislature, he was chair of Budget and Oversight for the Ways and
21 Means Committee, served ably on the Appropriations Committee, and
22 chaired the Rules and Resolutions Committee, a position he has held
23 since 1991; in previous sessions, he was the chair of Budget and
24 Oversight for the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee and chair of

1 the House Joint Committee on Rail Passenger Service in Texas; in
2 addition, Representative Edwards was a member of the Transportation
3 Committee for 22 years and of the Urban Affairs Committee for seven
4 terms; and

5 WHEREAS, A concerned and active citizen, Mr. Edwards has been
6 involved in a variety of other initiatives addressing important
7 national and international causes; he was chairman and
8 vice-chairman of the Democratic National Committee Black Caucus,
9 served as Texas chairman for the 1984 and 1988 presidential
10 campaigns of the Rev. Jesse Jackson, and founded Operation Justus,
11 a community-based referral service addressing social issues;
12 furthermore, Mr. Edwards has not been reticent to return to the
13 direct forms of protest he learned during the civil rights
14 movement; in 1987 he was jailed for protesting the apartheid
15 government of South Africa and in 2004 led a march in Waller County
16 to bring attention to a voting-rights issue; and

17 WHEREAS, His distinguished legislative service and civic
18 activism have been duly honored with a wide range of awards and
19 commendations; cited by Who's Who in America and Who's Who of Global
20 Decision Makers, Mr. Edwards has also been inducted into the
21 African American Biographic Association Hall of Fame and is the
22 recipient of an honorary doctorate from the University of Belize;
23 and

24 WHEREAS, Having assumed many roles in his life, including
25 those of social activist, religious minister, business person, and
26 civic leader, Al Edwards has brought a vast range of experience to
27 his legislative career, and his exemplary service has reflected an

1 ongoing effort to aid Texans in all walks of life and to create a
2 state in which they can share in the benefits of freedom and
3 prosperity; now, therefore, be it

4 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 79th Texas
5 Legislature, 3rd Called Session, hereby commend the Honorable Al
6 Edwards for his notable service as a member of this legislative body
7 and extend to him warmest best wishes for success and happiness in
8 the future; and, be it further

9 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
10 prepared for Representative Edwards as an expression of high regard
11 by his colleagues in the Texas House of Representatives.