

By: Eissler

H.C.R. No. 12

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1           WHEREAS, The Woodlands celebrated its 30th anniversary in  
2 October 2004, and this milestone provides a fitting opportunity to  
3 honor the community's founder, George Mitchell; and

4           WHEREAS, The son of a Greek immigrant, George Mitchell rose  
5 from an underprivileged background in Galveston to own a Fortune  
6 500 company, Mitchell Energy and Development Corporation, and to be  
7 named to the Forbes list of the 400 richest Americans; although this  
8 esteemed businessman has drilled 12,000 oil and gas wells,  
9 dedicated himself to countless philanthropic causes, and earned  
10 numerous awards, including the Texas A&M Distinguished Alumni  
11 Award, the Horatio Alger Award, the Texas Business Hall of Fame  
12 Award, and the National Preservation Honor Award, he considers one  
13 of his crowning achievements the establishment of The Woodlands;  
14 and

15           WHEREAS, A 27,000-acre forested community located 27 miles  
16 north of Houston, The Woodlands was originally conceived in the  
17 1960s when Mr. Mitchell envisioned creating a master-planned  
18 community that would integrate commercial and residential growth  
19 with the surrounding natural environment; in 1964, he successfully  
20 acquired 50,000 acres of timberland in Montgomery County for the  
21 project from the Grogan-Cochran Timber Company, but 300 additional  
22 transactions would be required before construction finally  
23 commenced in 1972; and

24           WHEREAS, With fewer than 40 residents, The Woodlands

1 officially opened on October 19, 1974, when a flag was raised at The  
2 Woodlands Information Center; and

3 WHEREAS, When George Mitchell learned that a Conroe  
4 schoolteacher could not afford to build a home in the area, this  
5 compassionate Texan immediately worked to remedy that situation by  
6 taking advantage of a housing and urban development act, which  
7 allowed loan guarantees for construction of affordable housing in  
8 burgeoning communities; and

9 WHEREAS, The HUD loans mandated that a minimum of 23 percent  
10 of the development be left as open space, and the actual figure  
11 today is closer to 25 percent, translating to approximately 5,000  
12 acres devoted to green space in parks, golf courses, greenbelts,  
13 and hiking and biking trails; and

14 WHEREAS, Currently, more than 70,000 residents and 1,100  
15 businesses call The Woodlands home and over 30,000 people are  
16 employed in the community; George Mitchell and his wife, Cynthia,  
17 maintain a home there, and the Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion, an  
18 outdoor amphitheater and performing arts facility that was opened  
19 in 1990, is the official summer home of the Houston Symphony  
20 Orchestra, thanks to a generous gift from the couple; and

21 WHEREAS, George Mitchell's refusal to compromise his goal of  
22 creating a close-knit community that would achieve a harmonious  
23 balance between social, economic, and ecological concerns has  
24 resulted in a city that many consider to be the quintessential  
25 American community, and it is a pleasure to recognize him for this  
26 extraordinary achievement; now, therefore, be it

27 RESOLVED, That the 79th Legislature of the State of Texas

1 hereby honor George Mitchell on the 30th anniversary of the  
2 founding of The Woodlands and extend to him deep appreciation for  
3 his ingenuity, his generosity, and his unwavering dedication to  
4 realizing his dream; and, be it further

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