

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 904

In Memory
of
William Freeman Simmons

WHEREAS, The Senate of the State of Texas joins the citizens of Irving and devotees of Western swing from around the world in mourning the death of William Freeman Simmons, who died January 24, 2005, at the age of 80; and

WHEREAS, A keyboard player for the Light Crust Doughboys, Bill began playing the piano as soon as he could reach the keys and was playing professionally on the radio by the time he was in high school; he also played the guitar, clarinet, saxophone, bass, trumpet, fiddle, and mandolin; and

WHEREAS, Bill began performing with the Light Crust Doughboys in 1954; he became a regular in 1981 and won a Grammy with the group in 2003; and

WHEREAS, Music was his life, and he composed a number of songs; perhaps the most well known is "M-I-S-S-I-S-S-I-P-P-I," a pop classic that he wrote with his wife, Lena "Bunny" Simmons, and that was recorded by Ella Fitzgerald, Red Foley, and the Light Crust Doughboys; and

WHEREAS, A quiet man who loved to perform, Bill Simmons is a member of the Texas Cowboy Hall of Fame, the Texas Western Swing Hall of Fame, the Rockabilly Hall of Fame, and the International Country Gospel Hall of Fame; and

WHEREAS, Bill gave unselfishly of himself to others, and his warmth, strength, and generosity will not be forgotten; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 79th Legislature, hereby extend sincere condolences to the bereaved family of William Freeman Simmons: his wife, Lena "Bunny" Simmons; his daughters, Cynthia Louise Wainscott and Anna Mae Leddy; his sons, Fred Simmons and William F. Simmons, Jr.; and his seven grandchildren and 23 great-grandchildren; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be prepared for the members of the Simmons family as an expression of deepest sympathy from the Texas Senate, and that when the Senate adjourns this day, it do so in memory of William Freeman Simmons.

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President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on May 16, 2005, by a rising vote.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate