

By: Hughes

H.C.R. No. 234

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, The State of Texas lost a distinguished public
2 servant with the passing of the Honorable William M. Steger, U.S.
3 District Judge for the Eastern District of Texas, on June 4, 2006,
4 at the age of 85; and

5 WHEREAS, Born in Dallas on August 22, 1920, William Steger
6 graduated from Woodrow Wilson High School in 1938 and attended
7 Baylor University from 1938 to 1941; he volunteered for the United
8 States Army Air Corps after the bombing of Pearl Harbor and was
9 commissioned a second lieutenant and issued his pilot's wings in
10 November 1942; and

11 WHEREAS, The young officer's service in the military included
12 56 combat missions in the Tunisian, Sicilian, and Italian
13 campaigns, and his heroism earned him the Air Medal and four Oak
14 Leaf Clusters as well as a promotion to the rank of captain; on his
15 return to the United States, he headed up testing of the first
16 military jet aircraft until he was honorably discharged in 1947;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, In 1948, William Steger married Ann Hollandsworth
19 and entered Southern Methodist University Law School; after
20 receiving his degree in 1950, he started a private practice in
21 Longview and became actively involved in the Republican Party; and

22 WHEREAS, He served as a delegate to the 1952 Republican
23 National Convention, and the following year he was appointed by
24 President Eisenhower as the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District

1 of Texas; that appointment brought Judge Steger and his wife to
2 Tyler, where he later joined the law firm of Wilson, Miller, Spivey,
3 and Steger, practicing with that firm until 1970; and

4 WHEREAS, In 1960, the Republican Party of Texas nominated
5 Judge Steger as its candidate for governor and, while unsuccessful
6 in his bid for the governorship, his ability to draw votes enabled
7 the party to hold its first presidential primary in Texas in 1964;
8 he was also chosen by his party to run for congress in 1962; and

9 WHEREAS, Judge Steger's affiliation with the Republican
10 Party continued for the rest of his life and included such
11 significant posts as Republican presidential elector, member of the
12 State Republican Executive Committee, subcommittee chair of the
13 Texas Republican Task Force on Crime and Law Enforcement, delegate
14 to the 1968 Republican National Convention, chair of the rules
15 committee at the Texas Republican Party Convention, and,
16 ultimately, chair of the Republican Party of Texas; and

17 WHEREAS, After stepping down from the latter post following
18 the 1970 elections, Judge Steger was appointed U.S. District Judge
19 for the Eastern District of Texas by President Richard Nixon in
20 December of that year, and he served his fellow citizens with great
21 distinction in that capacity for the remainder of his life,
22 presiding over more than 5,000 cases; and

23 WHEREAS, Recognized as a man of high moral character and
24 integrity, Judge Steger was a charter member of Green Acres Baptist
25 Church and sang with the church choir for more than 40 years; his
26 notable career in jurisprudence and politics earned him recognition
27 in *Who's Who in America*, *Who's Who in the Southwest*, and *Who's Who in*

1 *Law in America*; a 32nd degree Mason as well, he enjoyed membership
2 in the Shriners and was an avid outdoorsman and fisherman
3 throughout his life; he was also a devoted father to his son,
4 Merritt Reed Steger, who preceded him in death; and

5 WHEREAS, Though it is impossible to gauge the full effect of a
6 man's life, some individuals leave their unmistakable mark on the
7 world as they move through it, and William Steger's contributions
8 to his community, state, and nation will continue to resonate for
9 many years to come; now, therefore, be it

10 RESOLVED, That the 80th Legislature of the State of Texas
11 hereby pay tribute to the life of the Honorable William M. Steger
12 and extend deepest sympathy to the members of his family: to his
13 wife, Ann Hollandsworth Steger; to his nieces and nephews, Barbara
14 Schoolcraft, Sally Forte, Ann Nelson Grant, Scot McComas, Kelly
15 Edens, and Andrew McComas; and to his other relatives and friends;
16 and, be it further

17 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
18 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of
19 Representatives and Senate adjourn this day, they do so in memory of
20 Judge William M. Steger.