

By: Smith of Tarrant

H.C.R. No. 263

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1           WHEREAS, The legendary aviation industry pioneer C. R. Smith  
2 was inducted into the Texas Transportation Hall of Honor on October  
3 10, 2006, in a ceremony held at the American Airlines C. R. Smith  
4 Museum in Fort Worth; and

5           WHEREAS, Born the eldest of seven children on September 9,  
6 1899, in Minerva, Cyrus Rowlett Smith started working at the age of  
7 nine as an office boy, and as a young man he worked bookkeeping and  
8 picking cotton and as a store clerk and bank teller; despite his  
9 lack of a high school diploma, he studied business administration,  
10 economics, and law at The University of Texas at Austin; and

11           WHEREAS, After college he worked for an accountancy firm and  
12 then for A. P. Barrett's Texas-Louisiana Power Company; when Mr.  
13 Barrett bought Texas Air Transport in 1928, he asked the talented  
14 young Mr. Smith to be treasurer and secretary; and

15           WHEREAS, By 1934, the air transport company had grown into a  
16 commercial passenger airline, and on October 25 of that year, at the  
17 age of 35, C. R. Smith became the first president of American  
18 Airlines; and

19           WHEREAS, Known simply as "Mr. C. R." to the company's  
20 employees, Mr. Smith organized the airline's routes into a  
21 consolidated network and standardized its fleet, making it the  
22 first airline to fly the new Douglas DC-3 in commercial passenger  
23 service; under his leadership, American carried its one millionth  
24 passenger by 1937, and by 1940 it was the leading domestic air

1 carrier; and

2 WHEREAS, During World War II Mr. Smith answered this nation's  
3 call to arms, stepping away from the airline to organize the Air  
4 Transport Command as a colonel in the Army Air Corps; by the end of  
5 the war he was Major General Smith and deputy commander of the Air  
6 Transport Command; and

7 WHEREAS, Returning to lead American Airlines in 1945, he  
8 oversaw the growth of the company into the jet and computer age; in  
9 1959 American became the first airline to offer jet service  
10 coast-to-coast, with the Boeing 707, and in the early 60s, the  
11 company partnered with IBM to implement the SABRE electronic data  
12 processing system; and

13 WHEREAS, Mr. Smith was appointed Secretary of Commerce in  
14 1968 by President Lyndon Johnson, and he served in that post for the  
15 last year of Johnson's presidency; and

16 WHEREAS, Called out of retirement in 1973, Mr. Smith served  
17 once again as American Airline's interim chairman until Albert V.  
18 Casey became chairman and CEO; and

19 WHEREAS, Active for the rest of his life in civic affairs, Mr.  
20 Smith passed away on April 4, 1990, and was accorded the honor of  
21 burial in Arlington National Cemetery; and

22 WHEREAS, The Texas Transportation Hall of Honor was  
23 established in January 2000 by the Texas Transportation Institute  
24 at Texas A&M University to recognize exceptional individuals in the  
25 history of Texas transportation; opened in 1993 at the American  
26 Airlines headquarters complex in Fort Worth, the American Airlines  
27 C. R. Smith Museum is one of the few museums in the world dedicated

1 entirely to commercial aviation, and it is fitting that this  
2 visionary Texas aviator, businessman, and civic leader should be  
3 accorded this well-deserved honor; now, therefore, be it

4         RESOLVED, That the 80th Legislature of the State of Texas  
5 hereby commemorate the induction of the late C. R. Smith into the  
6 Texas Transportation Hall of Honor; and, be it further

7         RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
8 prepared for Mr. Smith's family and that when the Texas Legislature  
9 adjourns this day, it do so in memory of C. R. Smith.