

By: Raymond

H.R. No. 718

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, With the passing of the Honorable Lloyd Bentsen on  
2 May 23, 2006, this state and nation have lost one of the most  
3 esteemed and influential American political leaders of recent  
4 times; and

5           WHEREAS, Born Lloyd Millard Bentsen, Jr., in Mission on  
6 February 11, 1921, the son of a prominent Hidalgo County family,  
7 Senator Bentsen graduated from The University of Texas School of  
8 Law in 1942; and

9           WHEREAS, He entered the military as a private that same year  
10 and served with valor in the U.S. Army Air Corps; at the age of 23,  
11 he was promoted to the rank of major and given command of a squadron  
12 of 600 men; shot down twice while flying combat missions in Europe,  
13 he received the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal with  
14 three Oak Leaf Clusters; and

15           WHEREAS, After returning to the Valley in 1945, Senator  
16 Bentsen entered the private practice of law in McAllen; he served as  
17 county judge of Hidalgo County from 1946 to 1948, when he was sworn  
18 in as the youngest member of the U.S. House of Representatives;  
19 during the next six years, he became a protege of Congressman Sam  
20 Rayburn, who believed the South Texan might one day accede to the  
21 speakership; and

22           WHEREAS, Lloyd Bentsen retired from the house in early 1955,  
23 however, and moved his family to Houston, where he began a highly  
24 successful career in insurance and finance; he returned to the

1 political arena in 1970, winning the first of four consecutive  
2 terms in the U.S. Senate; within just a few years, he gained  
3 appointment to the powerful Senate Committee on Finance, which he  
4 ultimately chaired, and where he became a forceful proponent of  
5 trade expansion and pension reform; and

6 WHEREAS, In 1988, Senator Bentsen ran for the office of vice  
7 president on the Democratic ticket, together with presidential  
8 nominee Michael Dukakis; although defeated, Senator Bentsen  
9 impressed voters and political observers alike with his dignified  
10 demeanor and quietly commanding presence, and he emerged from the  
11 campaign with a national reputation and his stature even further  
12 enhanced; that same year, he won reelection to the senate by the  
13 widest margin of his career; and

14 WHEREAS, Senator Bentsen resigned his seat on January 20,  
15 1993, to become President Bill Clinton's first secretary of the  
16 treasury; in that capacity, he became one of the architects of the  
17 president's deficit-reduction program, guided the new  
18 administration's first budget through Congress, and played an  
19 instrumental role in the passage of two major trade bills,  
20 including the North American Free Trade Agreement; and

21 WHEREAS, Following his retirement from the cabinet in 1994,  
22 Senator Bentsen returned to Houston, where he helped to create a  
23 billion-dollar private investment firm to finance projects in Latin  
24 America; he also traveled widely and chaired the advisory committee  
25 of the Beacon Group, a New York investment bank; and

26 WHEREAS, In 1999, President Clinton conferred on Lloyd  
27 Bentsen the nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal

1 of Freedom; two years later, The University of Texas School of Law  
2 bestowed on Senator Bentsen a Lifetime Achievement Award and, with  
3 an endowment established by his friends, created the Lloyd M.  
4 Bentsen Chair in Law; and

5 WHEREAS, This esteemed Texan was married on November 27,  
6 1943, to Beryl Ann Longino, a college classmate, with whom he shared  
7 a union of more than six decades; and

8 WHEREAS, Renowned for his even temper, self-discipline, and  
9 good humor, Senator Bentsen enjoyed the friendship of many members  
10 of both parties and excelled at building coalitions to achieve  
11 common goals; his service to his country, in both war and peace, is  
12 deserving of the deepest appreciation of every American; now,  
13 therefore, be it

14 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 80th Texas  
15 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life of the Honorable Lloyd  
16 Bentsen and extend sincere sympathy to the members of his family:  
17 to his wife, Beryl Ann Longino Bentsen; to his children, Lloyd  
18 Bentsen III, Lan Bentsen, and Tina Bentsen Smith; to his  
19 grandchildren; and to his other relatives and numerous friends;  
20 and, be it further

21 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
22 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of  
23 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of the  
24 Honorable Lloyd Bentsen.