

By: Branch

H.R. No. 1454

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, The Honorable Jack Pope, a former chief justice of  
2 the Texas Supreme Court who has rendered immeasurable service to  
3 the Lone Star State, is celebrating his 94th birthday on April 18,  
4 2007; and

5           WHEREAS, Born and raised in Abilene, Judge Pope knew from the  
6 time he was a boy that he wanted to be a lawyer; as a youth, he also  
7 showed the passion for learning that later marked his distinguished  
8 career; a voracious reader, he found inspiration in such figures as  
9 the Roman historian Tacitus and orator Cicero; and

10           WHEREAS, After graduating from Abilene High School in 1930,  
11 Jack Pope attended Abilene Christian College, where he majored in  
12 speech, earned letters as a member of the debate and tennis teams,  
13 and served as president of the junior class and the Student  
14 Association; subsequently, at The University of Texas School of  
15 Law, he served as student editor of the *Texas Law Review*; and

16           WHEREAS, Licensed by the bar in 1937, Judge Pope moved to  
17 Corpus Christi and joined the firm of his uncle, former state  
18 representative Walter E. Pope; he quickly gained wide-ranging  
19 experience in civil and criminal law and in New Deal-era labor and  
20 transportation regulatory law; and

21           WHEREAS, Though he was exempt from military service in World  
22 War II because he was the father of two young children, Judge Pope  
23 enlisted in the U.S. Navy Reserve in 1944 and served stateside for  
24 the next two years; discharged in 1946, he returned to the practice

1 of law but later that year received an appointment as judge of the  
2 94th District Court, becoming, at the age of 33, the youngest  
3 district judge then serving in Texas; and

4 WHEREAS, In 1950, Judge Pope won the first of three  
5 consecutive terms on the Court of Civil Appeals in San Antonio;  
6 during his tenure, he issued a landmark ruling concerning the  
7 Spanish roots of Texas water law, establishing a precedent that  
8 continues to guide jurists to the present day; and

9 WHEREAS, Elected to the Texas Supreme Court in 1964, Judge  
10 Pope helped to draft significant rulings on property rights and  
11 tort reform during his years as an associate justice; in 1982  
12 Governor Bill Clements appointed him to the post of chief justice,  
13 an office he held until his retirement in 1985, and his tenure in  
14 that post was marked by the elimination of double appeals and by  
15 other important reforms in court administration; and

16 WHEREAS, Known for the lucidity of his thought and writing,  
17 Judge Pope published more than 1,000 judicial opinions and over 70  
18 law-related articles during the course of his career; and

19 WHEREAS, Since stepping down from the bench two decades ago,  
20 Judge Pope has continued to lead an active life; he has served as  
21 president of the National Council of the *Christian Chronicle*, a  
22 publication covering news of the Churches of Christ, and coedited a  
23 volume about his ancestor John Berry, a notable Texas pioneer; and

24 WHEREAS, Judge Pope credits Abilene Christian University  
25 with providing an essential foundation for his success in life, and  
26 in return for the invaluable lessons he learned there, he has been  
27 one of that school's staunchest supporters; he joined the ACU Board

1 of Trustees in 1954 and has served on the senior board since 1983;  
2 and

3 WHEREAS, In tribute to its esteemed graduate, ACU has  
4 conferred on Judge Pope its Outstanding Alumnus of the Year award,  
5 as well as its Change the World award; moreover, since 1989, the  
6 school has bestowed scholarships on outstanding students who are  
7 intending to pursue a career in public service, designating them as  
8 Jack Pope Fellows; and

9 WHEREAS, Another institution that has benefited from Judge  
10 Pope's active involvement is the State Law Library, which was  
11 created as a separate state agency in 1971 largely through his  
12 efforts; Judge Pope serves as a member emeritus of the Friends of  
13 the State Law Library Board of Directors, and the Friends have  
14 recognized him and another former chief justice, Joe Greenhill,  
15 with the establishment of the Greenhill-Pope Law Book Fund; and

16 WHEREAS, Judge Pope is the recipient of four honorary degrees  
17 and countless other accolades; on April 20, 2007, he is being  
18 saluted by Austin Groups for the Elderly with the Willie Kocurek  
19 Vital Aging Award; and

20 WHEREAS, From their marriage in 1938 until her passing in  
21 2004, Judge Pope and his wife, Allene, shared a richly rewarding  
22 union; their family today includes two sons, Allen and Jackson  
23 Pope, two grandsons, Drew and Ryan Pope, and two  
24 great-grandchildren, Dylan and Peyton Locke; and

25 WHEREAS, Hailed for his intellect and integrity, Judge Pope  
26 has contributed significantly to jurisprudence in the State of  
27 Texas, and it is indeed a privilege to join in wishing him well on

1 this special day; now, therefore, be it

2           RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 80th Texas  
3 Legislature hereby congratulate the Honorable Jack Pope on the  
4 joyous occasion of his 94th birthday and extend to him profound  
5 appreciation for his exemplary public service; and, be it further

6           RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
7 prepared for Judge Pope as an expression of high regard by the Texas  
8 House of Representatives.