

By: Hodge

H.R. No. 17

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The State of Texas lost a distinguished native son
2 and legendary champion of the underdog with the passing of Jim
3 Mattox of Dripping Springs on November 20, 2008, at the age of 65;
4 and

5 WHEREAS, Born in Dallas on August 29, 1943, James Albon
6 Mattox was the oldest child of a union sheet-metal worker and a
7 waitress; he worked his way through Baylor University, initially
8 intending to enter the ministry; when President John F. Kennedy was
9 assassinated in his own hometown, he felt called to public service,
10 and after earning his law degree from Southern Methodist
11 University, he became an aide to U.S. Representative Earle Cabell
12 in the Fifth Congressional District; and

13 WHEREAS, Mr. Mattox went on to join the Dallas County
14 district attorney's office as a criminal prosecutor; in 1973, he
15 began the first of two terms in the Texas House of Representatives,
16 where he helped draft the state's first open-records law as a member
17 of the bipartisan reform group "the Dirty 30" and was instrumental
18 in the passage of consumer protection laws; after winning the Fifth
19 Congressional District seat in 1976, he was elected to the powerful
20 House Budget Committee, a singular achievement for a freshman, and
21 during his three terms, this dynamic legislator chaired that
22 committee's Task Force on National Security and Veterans Affairs
23 and served on the Banking and Finance and Corporate Affairs
24 Committees; and

1 WHEREAS, In 1982, Mr. Mattox was elected to the first of two
2 remarkable terms as Texas attorney general; fearless in the face of
3 controversy and unrelenting in his commitment to consumer rights,
4 he took on airlines, automakers, insurance companies, and more; he
5 made Texas a national leader in prosecuting deceptive advertising
6 practices and won millions of dollars in settlements for the state;
7 in addition, he battled for struggling single parents and their
8 children, bringing sweeping change to the system for collecting
9 child support, and he greatly increased gender and racial diversity
10 in the attorney general's office; and

11 WHEREAS, Even after beginning a private law practice,
12 Mr. Mattox remained a lion in Democratic politics and continued to
13 strive for progressive causes and reform; he served as a delegate at
14 numerous national conventions and contributed in myriad ways during
15 the 2008 election cycle; most recently, he testified at a hearing on
16 his party's "Texas two-step" system for nominating presidential
17 candidates and drew a standing ovation for his rousing words; and

18 WHEREAS, Devoted to his family, Mr. Mattox helped support and
19 nurture his young brother and sister after his mother's untimely
20 death; moreover, he enjoyed a rewarding marriage of 18 years to
21 Marta Mattox and cherished their two children, Jim and Janet; as
22 engaging and generous as he was outspoken, he will be deeply mourned
23 by those who knew him, from his childhood neighbors to his
24 colleagues in public office; a Texan who cast a long shadow, Jim
25 Mattox raised his voice loudly for working Americans, and his
26 achievements will continue to resonate in this state for many years
27 to come; now, therefore, be it

1 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 81st Texas
2 Legislature, 1st Called Session, hereby pay special tribute to the
3 memory of Jim Mattox and extend sincere sympathy to the members of
4 his family: to his wife, Marta; to his son, Jim; to his daughter,
5 Janet; to his sister, Janice; to his brother, Jerry; and to his
6 other friends and admirers across the country; and, be it further

7 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
8 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of
9 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Jim Mattox.