

By: Madden

H.R. No. 65

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, Jimmie Hall Kester, a respected expert in the field  
2 of juvenile justice and a cherished friend to many, passed away on  
3 June 18, 2009, at the age of 72; and

4           WHEREAS, The son of Velman "Jack" and Sallie Kester, Jim  
5 Kester was born on August 31, 1936, in Reed, Oklahoma, and spent his  
6 early years on a cotton farm; his family later moved throughout the  
7 southwestern United States, where he enjoyed an adventurous  
8 childhood along with his older brother, Jack; at the age of 18, Mr.  
9 Kester joined the U.S. Navy, and while he was in college, he  
10 continued his service as a member of the Naval Reserve; he went on  
11 to earn bachelor's and master's degrees in education from the  
12 University of Oklahoma and a master's degree in social service  
13 administration from the University of Chicago, and he also pursued  
14 doctoral studies in philosophy; and

15           WHEREAS, After working as a public school teacher and a  
16 social worker in New York City's Hell's Kitchen neighborhood in the  
17 1960s, Mr. Kester focused his career on helping at-risk youth; he  
18 served as director of the Oklahoma Council on Crime and Delinquency  
19 before accepting a position in the Criminal Justice Division of the  
20 Texas Governor's Office in 1975; there he introduced innovative  
21 programs and improved services for at-risk youth, and his ability  
22 to foster positive working relationships with others made him a  
23 valued public servant over the course of three decades and five  
24 different gubernatorial administrations; on his retirement, he

1 remained a tireless advocate for troubled young people as a member  
2 of the Governor's Juvenile Justice Advisory Board and as a board  
3 member of the Council on At-Risk Youth; and

4 WHEREAS, Mr. Kester further contributed to his community as a  
5 mentor to Austin public school students and as a member of the  
6 American Legion, Travis Post 76; moreover, he taught Sunday school  
7 and participated in such church programs as the Stephen Ministry  
8 and Emmaus; in his leisure time, he took pleasure in studying naval  
9 history and in tending to his property in the Texas Hill Country,  
10 which he affectionately called "The Land"; and

11 WHEREAS, Jim Kester was an inspiring role model to friends,  
12 family, and colleagues alike, who were drawn to his kind and  
13 generous nature, as well as to his gift for finding meaning in the  
14 everyday; although he will be deeply missed by all those who were  
15 privileged to know him, he leaves behind a legacy that will continue  
16 to resonate for years to come; now, therefore, be it

17 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 81st Texas  
18 Legislature, 1st Called Session, hereby pay tribute to the memory  
19 of Jimmie Hall Kester and extend sincere condolences to the members  
20 of his family: to his wife, Metha; to his children, Steve Kester and  
21 his wife, Ellen, Jennifer Nielsen and her husband, Rod, Elizabeth  
22 Valdez, Amy Kura, and Megan Massey and her husband, Lance; to his  
23 grandchildren, Lauryn Saenz and her husband, Mario, Paul, Savannah,  
24 Ava, Kathryn, Tess, Sarah, and Thomas; to his brother, Jack Kester  
25 and his wife, Lawanda; to his nieces, Lisa and Laura; and to his  
26 other relatives and many friends; and, be it further

27 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be

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1 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of  
2 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Jim Kester.