

By: Heflin

H.R. No. 144

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The life of a celebrated Texas athlete drew to a
2 close with the passing of Sammy Baugh of Rotan on December 17, 2008,
3 at the age of 94; and

4 WHEREAS, Considered one of the greatest quarterbacks to ever
5 play professional football, "Slingin'" Sammy Baugh revolutionized
6 the game with his mastery of the forward pass; thanks largely to his
7 sensational achievements with the Washington Redskins in the 1930s
8 and 1940s, the sport moved toward the wide-open, high-scoring style
9 of offense that is familiar to today's fans; and

10 WHEREAS, Samuel Adrian Baugh was born on March 17, 1914, in
11 Temple; his family moved to Sweetwater when he was a teenager, and
12 he played both football and baseball at his high school and then at
13 Texas Christian University, leading the Horned Frogs to the
14 football national championship in 1935 and important bowl game
15 victories in his next two seasons; a superb athlete, he almost chose
16 a career in professional baseball but instead signed with the
17 Washington Redskins in 1937 at the age of 23; and

18 WHEREAS, With an uncanny ability to throw passes with
19 pinpoint accuracy, Mr. Baugh changed the game almost immediately;
20 in his rookie year, he broke the NFL record for pass completions and
21 led the Redskins to the 1937 NFL championship game; on a bitterly
22 cold December day, Mr. Baugh threw for 335 yards and 3 touchdowns,
23 and his team upset the Chicago Bears on their home field to take the
24 league title; and

1 WHEREAS, Mr. Baugh would go on to win a second NFL
2 championship with Washington in 1942 as well as four division
3 titles; along the way, he changed the concept of how much yardage
4 could be gained through the air and led the league in passing for
5 six years; his achievements are even more impressive given that he,
6 like many players of his era, played on both the offensive and
7 defensive squads as well as on special teams; moreover, he played
8 all of his positions extremely well, racking up 31 career
9 interceptions as a defensive back and establishing himself as the
10 league's best punter each season between 1940 and 1943; his
11 single-season punting average of 51.4 yards in 1940 still stands as
12 an NFL record; and

13 WHEREAS, Choosing to hang up his cleats after 16 NFL seasons,
14 he retired in 1952, but his football days were not over; he went on
15 to serve as the head coach at Hardin-Simmons University in the late
16 1950s and later for the New York Titans and Houston Oilers
17 professional teams; the cattle business was his other calling; he
18 bought the Double Mountain Ranch near Rotan in 1941, and he and his
19 wife, Edmonia, ran the 6,300-acre property for many decades; and

20 WHEREAS, Sammy Baugh was selected as a member of the first
21 group of players inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame, and
22 his stature was further underscored in 1994, when he earned a place
23 on the NFL's 75th anniversary team; one of the game's all-time
24 legends, his name will be revered long into the future, and his
25 achievements are a poignant reminder of the Lone Star State's
26 legacy of athletic excellence; now, therefore, be it

27 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 81st Texas

1 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life of Sammy Baugh and extend
2 deepest condolences to the members of his family: to his children,
3 David, Todd, Stephen, and Frances Baugh; to his sister, Nell
4 Kindrick; to his 12 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren; and
5 to his other relatives and friends; and, be it further

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