

By: Branch

H.R. No. 1226

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 96th birthday on April 18,
4 2009; 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; he was a voracious reader who found inspiration in such
9 figures as the Roman historian Tacitus and orator Cicero; and

10 WHEREAS, Jack Pope graduated from Abilene High School in 1930
11 and went on to attend 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, Judge Pope was elected to the Texas Supreme Court in
10 1964 and 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, This esteemed Texan has continued to lead an active
20 life since stepping down from the bench two decades ago; he has
21 served as president of the National Council of the *Christian*
22 *Chronicle*, a publication covering news of the Churches of Christ,
23 and coedited a volume about his ancestor John Berry, a notable Texas
24 pioneer; and

25 WHEREAS, Judge Pope credits Abilene Christian University
26 with providing an essential foundation for his success in life, and
27 in return for the invaluable lessons he learned there, he has been

1 one of that school's staunchest supporters; he joined the ACU Board
2 of Trustees in 1954 and has served on the senior board since 1983;
3 and

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

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

17 WHEREAS, Jack Pope shared a rewarding marriage with his wife,
18 Allene, from 1938 until her passing in 2004; their family today
19 includes two sons, Allen and Jackson Pope, two grandsons, Drew and
20 Ryan Pope, and two great-grandchildren, Dylan and Peyton Locke; and

21 WHEREAS, Hailed for his intellect and integrity, Judge Pope
22 has contributed significantly to jurisprudence in the State of
23 Texas, and it is indeed a privilege to join in wishing him well on
24 this special day; now, therefore, be it

25 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 81st Texas
26 Legislature hereby congratulate the Honorable Jack Pope on the
27 joyous occasion of his 96th birthday and extend to him profound

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1 appreciation for his exemplary public service; and, be it further

2 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be

3 prepared for Judge Pope as an expression of high regard by the Texas

4 House of Representatives.