

By: Hodge

H.R. No. 1276

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Across this state and nation, people who wage the
2 fight for social justice are mourning the loss of Frederick Martin
3 Baron of Dallas, who passed away on October 30, 2008, at the age of
4 61; and

5 WHEREAS, Born in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in 1947, Mr. Baron moved
6 to Smithville when he was 15; an outstanding student and football
7 star in high school, he went on to attend The University of Texas at
8 Austin, where he earned a B.A. in 1968 and a J.D. in 1971; and

9 WHEREAS, Inspired by consumer advocate Ralph Nader, Mr. Baron
10 went to work after law school at the Dallas-based firm of Mullinax,
11 Wells, Mauzy & Baab, which represented labor unions and union
12 workers; in 1974, he filed a major case concerning asbestos
13 exposure at an East Texas plant, a suit that eventually resulted in
14 an award of \$20 million and that helped establish his reputation as
15 an able and tenacious attorney; Mr. Baron formed his own firm, now
16 known as Baron & Budd, in 1977 to represent victims of occupational
17 diseases and industrial pollution; over the course of a more than
18 30-year career, his formidable skills and passionate engagement
19 would make him a national leader in the field of asbestos and other
20 toxic-tort litigation; and

21 WHEREAS, Mr. Baron's commitment to the cause of worker and
22 consumer safety was evident, as well, in his professional
23 affiliations; he cofounded Trial Lawyers for Public Justice in 1982
24 and served as president of that group from 1997 to 1998; other

1 organizations to benefit from his involvement were the Association
2 of Trial Lawyers of America, which he served as president, and the
3 American Constitution Society for Law and Policy, of which he was a
4 founding board member; in addition, he was a staunch supporter of
5 Public Citizen and People for the American Way; and

6 WHEREAS, Fred Baron stepped down from his firm in December
7 2002 to focus his efforts on politics and charitable causes; he
8 played a major role in raising funds for the Kerry/Edwards ticket in
9 2004, and he served as national finance chair for John Edwards in
10 both of his runs for the presidency; in 2005, Mr. Baron founded the
11 Texas Democratic Trust, which has greatly assisted the state's
12 Democratic Party; and

13 WHEREAS, Together with his wife, Lisa Blue-Baron, Fred Baron
14 created the Baron and Blue Foundation, which works with area
15 organizations to eliminate homelessness and address the needs of
16 the underserved; the couple also gave over the first floor of their
17 home to religious, philanthropic, and cultural organizations,
18 welcoming their fund-raisers and other events; the depth of Mr.
19 Baron's empathy for those in distress was demonstrated yet again in
20 the wake of Hurricane Katrina, when he spent many days at Reunion
21 Arena taking food and other supplies to the refugees there,
22 listening to their stories, and helping them in whatever way he
23 could; and

24 WHEREAS, The recipient of myriad accolades, this
25 distinguished Texan was named a "Legal Legend" by *Texas Lawyer*,
26 designated one of the "100 Most Influential Lawyers in the U.S." by
27 the *National Law Journal*, and presented with an Outstanding Service

1 Award by the William Wayne Justice Center for Public Interest Law at
2 The University of Texas School of Law; in 2001, his alma mater
3 established the Frederick M. Baron Chair in Law in recognition of
4 his contributions to the school and his remarkable accomplishments;
5 and

6 WHEREAS, The impact of Fred Baron's life extended far and
7 wide; he fought relentlessly for the safety of ordinary citizens,
8 gave abundantly of his resources in behalf of others, and sought to
9 ensure that government would also serve those less fortunate, and
10 he will indeed be missed; now, therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 81st Texas
12 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the memory of Frederick Martin
13 Baron and extend sincere sympathy to the members of his family: to
14 his wife, Lisa Blue-Baron; to his children, Andrew Baron, Courtney
15 Baron and her husband, Brad Singer, and Alessandra, Caroline, and
16 Nathalie Baron; to his granddaughter, Liza; to his brother, Robert
17 Baron, and his sister, Joan Baron; and to his other relatives and
18 many friends; and, be it further

19 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
20 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of
21 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Frederick
22 Martin Baron.