

By: Shelton

H.R. No. 1734

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, Dr. Joe Kuban inspired countless students during  
2 more than three decades of service as a science teacher at Nolan  
3 Catholic High School in Fort Worth before his retirement in 2008;  
4 and

5           WHEREAS, A 1968 graduate of Nolan, Dr. Kuban returned to his  
6 alma mater as a teacher in 1973, and the following year he founded  
7 what is thought to be the longest-running high school ecology  
8 studies program in the country; he soon became known for his lively  
9 teaching style and passionate commitment to the environment, and  
10 his compelling example ignited the curiosity and interest of  
11 generations of students; and

12           WHEREAS, In a classroom distinguished by a display of globes,  
13 fieldwork tools, and finds from his excursions, Dr. Kuban taught  
14 students not only to identify flora and fauna but also to genuinely  
15 appreciate the natural world; together, they often ventured  
16 outdoors to engage with the environment firsthand, and each year he  
17 led field trips to some of his favorite places, including Big Bend  
18 National Park and the Big Thicket National Preserve in Texas, as  
19 well as Costa Rica and the Cayman Islands; he pointed out and  
20 described trees, rocks, birds, flowers, fish, and coral reefs with  
21 equal enthusiasm, and he encouraged students to become stewards of  
22 the land; in fact, more than a few of them have taken that message to  
23 heart and gone on to pursue careers in science and environmental  
24 work; and

1           WHEREAS, Dr. Kuban's delight in nature is rivaled only by his  
2 love of music, and he found an outlet for this pursuit early on at  
3 Nolan, when he wrote a song dedicated to the senior class; it marked  
4 the beginning of a cherished tradition that graduating students  
5 came to anticipate; moreover, in his leisure time, he composed  
6 ballads about the beauty of Texas and recorded two albums as Joe  
7 Kuban and the Lost Chizo Band; and

8           WHEREAS, After receiving a diagnosis of amyotrophic lateral  
9 sclerosis in the fall of 2006, Dr. Kuban continued to carry out his  
10 teaching responsibilities with the same dedication he had always  
11 demonstrated; he persevered for more than a year in a motorized  
12 scooter that students decorated and equipped with a horn, and in the  
13 end, rather than leaving his post to chance, he personally selected  
14 and trained a local graduate student to take his place; and

15           WHEREAS, This esteemed educator, who grew up near Lake Worth,  
16 holds two degrees from The University of Texas at Arlington and a  
17 doctorate from Syracuse University; in 1995, he received a Goodall  
18 ecology award, which earned him and his class a visit from renowned  
19 anthropologist Jane Goodall herself, and his teaching, music, and  
20 conservation legacy is honored in a plaque at Nolan; by his side is  
21 his loving wife, DeLane Kuban, with whom he has enjoyed more than a  
22 decade of marriage; and

23           WHEREAS, Though it is impossible to gauge the full effect of a  
24 man's life, some individuals leave their unmistakable mark on the  
25 world as they move through it, and Joe Kuban's contributions to  
26 Nolan Catholic High School have made a profound difference that  
27 will continue to resonate for years to come; now, therefore, be it

1           RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 81st Texas  
2 Legislature hereby honor Dr. Joe Kuban for his exceptional service  
3 as a longtime science teacher at Nolan Catholic High School and  
4 extend to him sincere gratitude for his outstanding efforts in  
5 behalf of young Texans; and, be it further

6           RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
7 prepared for Dr. Kuban as an expression of high regard by the Texas  
8 House of Representatives.