

By: Branch

H.R. No. 1989

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Senator John G. Tower, whose career of exceptional
2 public service spanned nearly five decades, is being honored by
3 family and friends with the dedication of a memorial marker at the
4 Texas State Cemetery on May 13, 2009; and

5 WHEREAS, Born in Houston in 1925, John Tower joined the navy
6 at the age of 17 and served for three years in the Western Pacific
7 during World War II; following his discharge from active duty in
8 1946, he served in the navy reserve until 1989, when he retired with
9 the rank of master chief boatswain's mate; and

10 WHEREAS, Drawn to politics and government from his youth,
11 Senator Tower earned a bachelor's degree in political science from
12 Southwestern University in 1948 and a master's degree from Southern
13 Methodist University in 1953; while a graduate student, he also
14 attended the London School of Economics; and

15 WHEREAS, From 1951 to 1960, John Tower served on the faculty
16 of Midwestern State University and became increasingly involved in
17 the state Republican Party; in 1961, at the age of 35, he scored a
18 surprise upset in the race to fill Vice President Lyndon
19 B. Johnson's newly vacated seat in the U.S. Senate; with his
20 victory, John Tower became the first Republican to be elected to the
21 senate from Texas since Reconstruction; he won reelection three
22 times before deciding not to run for a fifth term in 1984; and

23 WHEREAS, While in Congress, Senator Tower became
24 particularly knowledgeable and influential in matters relating to

1 the military and national defense; he served from 1965 until his
2 retirement on the Senate Armed Services Committee and chaired that
3 committee from 1981 to 1985; he also served for 14 years on the
4 Joint Committee on Defense Production and served throughout his
5 senate career on the Banking and Currency Committee, which became
6 the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs; and

7 WHEREAS, Widely respected for his legislative skills,
8 Senator Tower worked to strengthen financial institutions, improve
9 transportation systems, expand opportunities for small businesses,
10 increase U.S. exports, and promote many sectors of the economy that
11 are of major importance to Texas, including the agricultural,
12 energy, fishing, and maritime industries; he was also a leading
13 proponent of efforts to modernize and expand the military; and

14 WHEREAS, Senator Tower continued to hold positions of public
15 trust after leaving the senate; from January 1985 to April 1986, he
16 served as the chief U.S. negotiator in the Strategic Arms Reduction
17 Talks with the Soviet Union in Geneva, and from 1986 to 1987 he
18 chaired a panel known as the Tower Commission, which investigated
19 the Iran-Contra affair; he was appointed to the President's Foreign
20 Intelligence Advisory Board in 1987 and three years later became
21 the chair of that group, a post he held until his untimely death in
22 1991; and

23 WHEREAS, The author of two books, Senator Tower published *A*
24 *Program for Conservatives* in 1962 and *Consequences: A Personal and*
25 *Political Memoir* just months before he died; and

26 WHEREAS, Southwestern University long benefited from Senator
27 Tower's active leadership as a member of its board of trustees and

1 is now the repository for his papers; in appreciation of his
2 enduring support for the school and his outstanding contributions
3 in the public realm, the university conferred on Senator Tower both
4 an honorary doctor of literature degree and a Distinguished Alumnus
5 award and named a chair of political science in his honor; and

6 WHEREAS, John Tower devoted his life to the service of his
7 country, and this nation and the State of Texas gained immeasurably
8 from his zest for his work, his consummate ability, and his profound
9 patriotism; now, therefore, be it

10 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 81st Texas
11 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life and public service of
12 Senator John G. Tower and commemorate the installation of a
13 memorial marker in his honor at the Texas State Cemetery; and, be it
14 further

15 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
16 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of
17 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Senator
18 John G. Tower.