

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 282

In Memory
of
Willie I. Kocurek

WHEREAS, The Senate of the State of Texas joins the citizens of Austin in mourning the loss of Willie I. Kocurek, who died January 1, 2009, at the age of 98; and

WHEREAS, A longtime civic leader and supporter of education, Willie I. Kocurek was born in Dime Box on October 14, 1910; he graduated as valedictorian of his class at Caldwell High School before attending The University of Texas at Austin; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Kocurek paid his way through college by working at a filling station; he later bought the station, which became the foundation of the Willie Kocurek Company, expanding to include furniture, appliance, and tire sales; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Kocurek retired from his company in 1977 and returned to college, reenrolling in law school; at 69, he became the oldest person ever to graduate from The University of Texas School of Law, and he practiced law for 22 years following his graduation; and

WHEREAS, Passionate about education, Mr. Kocurek understood the benefits it brings to society, and for 40 years he devoted much of his time and energy to educational causes; he served as president of the board of the Austin Independent School District and of the Texas Association of School Boards, and he also served as a director of the National Association of School Boards; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Kocurek was fittingly honored in 1986 when an elementary school in southwest Austin was named for him; well known for his lifelong commitment to serving his community, he was chosen as Austin's Most Outstanding Young Man in 1941 and as Austin's Most Worthy Citizen in 1980, and he and his son Neal were chosen as Austinites of the Year in 1990; and

WHEREAS, A tireless volunteer, Mr. Kocurek was active in the Austin Founders Lions Club and served as director of the Lions Eye Bank; he also worked with Meals on Wheels, KLRU-TV, the Boys and Girls Clubs of Austin, the Capital Area Food Bank, and many other organizations; and

WHEREAS, A man of vision, strength, and generosity, he gave unselfishly to others, and his wisdom, his kindness, and his enthusiasm for living each day to the fullest will not be forgotten by those who knew him; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Kocurek was a devoted husband, father, and grandfather, and his family and countless friends will always treasure the cherished memories of his life and his many achievements; now, therefore, be it

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RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 81st Legislature, hereby extend sincere condolences to the bereaved family of Willie I. Kocurek: his wife of 74 years, Maurine Gustafson Kocurek; his daughter, Kay Kocurek Bell; his grandchildren, Jeff and Kelly Kocurek and Suzanne Kocurek Rose; and his great-grandchildren, Cole, Clayton, Melanie, Will, and Mary Frances Kocurek and Zack, Rebecca, and Hannah Rose; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be prepared for his family as an expression of deepest sympathy from the Texas Senate, and that when the Senate adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Willie I. Kocurek.

Watson

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on February 23, 2009, by a rising vote.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate