

By: S. Davis of Harris

H.R. No. 485

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Joseph W. Samuels, owner and publisher of the *Jewish*
2 *Herald-Voice* and a beloved figure in the Jewish community of
3 Houston, passed away on January 19, 2011, at the age of 95; and

4 WHEREAS, The eldest of three children, Joe Samuels was born
5 in Dallas on December 10, 1915, to Tillie Marion Wiener and Morris
6 Joseph Samuels; he lost his father when he was 13 years old and
7 spent the next five years with his siblings in the Jewish Children's
8 Home in New Orleans; and

9 WHEREAS, Settling in Houston at the age of 18, Mr. Samuels
10 worked at the post office, sold Remington typewriters, and produced
11 dramas for a local radio station, and he was later able to further
12 his education by taking classes at Rice University and the
13 University of Houston; he met the love of his life, Jeanne, at a
14 city bus stop, and the two were married in 1943; after enlisting in
15 the U.S. Army Air Corps, he served in Africa and Europe during World
16 War II, and then remained in the reserve until he retired with the
17 rank of lieutenant colonel; and

18 WHEREAS, On returning to Houston after the war, Mr. Samuels
19 opened a record and radio shop with his brother, and the two took
20 turns managing the business while completing their degrees; he and
21 his wife also began their family, and their son, Marc, was born in
22 1948, followed by two daughters, Maurene and Vicki; he helped found
23 the B'nai B'rith Downtown Lodge and published its newsletter, and he
24 later opened an insurance agency and a real estate office; and

1 WHEREAS, Mr. and Mrs. Samuels purchased the *Jewish*
2 *Herald-Voice* in 1973 and began a remarkable tenure as owners and
3 publishers that lasted for nearly four decades; under the direction
4 of the couple, the newspaper, which has been in print for more than
5 a century and is one of the oldest Jewish papers in the country, has
6 consistently championed the underdog and worked to fight injustice;
7 in addition, by overseeing the *Jewish Herald-Voice*, Mr. Samuels was
8 able to realize a dream held by his father, who had run a printing
9 business but had not lived long enough to begin a Jewish newspaper
10 of his own; and

11 WHEREAS, This esteemed Texan was a friend to synagogues and
12 organizations such as the Jewish Federation of Greater Houston,
13 Jewish Family Service of Houston, Seven Acres Jewish Senior Care
14 Services, and Holocaust Museum Houston; he was also a strong
15 supporter of the nation of Israel, visiting there more than a dozen
16 times, and receiving the Defender of Jerusalem Award along with his
17 wife in 2002; moreover, he gave financial backing to the Jewish
18 Children's Regional Service and hosted reunions for others who had
19 lived in the New Orleans children's home where he spent part of his
20 youth; and

21 WHEREAS, Through industry and tireless advocacy, Joe Samuels
22 became a legendary figure in his community, and his efforts did much
23 to promote unity, shared values, and mutual assistance among the
24 Jewish citizens of Houston and the State of Texas; now, therefore,
25 be it

26 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 82nd Texas
27 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the memory of Joseph W. Samuels

1 and extend sincere sympathy to the members of his family: to his
2 wife of 67 years, Jeanne Samuels; to his children, Marc Samuels and
3 his wife, Maylee, Maurene Bencal and her husband, Michael, and
4 Vicki Samuels Levy and her husband, Lawrence; to his grandchildren,
5 Wendy Waterman, Amy Duke and her husband, Jesse DeMartino, Michael
6 Duke and his wife, Naomi, Matthew Samuels and his wife, Kristy,
7 Daniel Waterman, David Duke and his wife, Lan, Benjamin Samuels,
8 Caroline Samuels, Sam Levy, Rebekah Levy, and Kimberly Bencal; to
9 his great-grandchildren, Alyssa Campbell, Isabel Duke, Cameron
10 Samuels, Joseph Duke, and Dylan Samuels; to his brother, Alvin "A.
11 Pat" Samuels; and to his other relatives and many friends; and, be
12 it further

13 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
14 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of
15 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Joe
16 Samuels.