

By: Taylor of Collin

H.R. No. 797

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Jim Dunlap retired as an instructor and curator at
2 Holifield Science Learning Center in the Plano Independent School
3 District in December 2010, bringing to a close an exemplary career
4 in education that has spanned nearly three and a half decades; and

5 WHEREAS, Mr. Dunlap first became fascinated with animals when
6 he was growing up in Mesquite; by the age of 10, he had a collection
7 of 52 box turtles, and his father built a shed in the backyard to
8 house them; and

9 WHEREAS, After serving in the U.S. Army in Germany, Mr.
10 Dunlap returned to Texas and started his career as a biology teacher
11 at Plano Senior High School in the 1970s; he engaged students with
12 his passion for nature and especially captured their attention when
13 he shared his live animal collection; his classes soon became so
14 popular that he had to move rooms every few years to accommodate the
15 demand; and

16 WHEREAS, Mr. Dunlap and his growing menagerie eventually
17 relocated from the school building entirely; in 1989, the
18 district's science learning center opened, and Mr. Dunlap became
19 curator of the Living Materials Center there; no longer Plano
20 Senior High's resource alone, Mr. Dunlap became an icon to
21 thousands of local students who learned hands-on about the
22 fascinating world of animals during field trips to the center or
23 during Mr. Dunlap's visits to their classrooms with his animals in
24 tow; and

1 WHEREAS, Through the years, a variety of creatures have made
2 their home at the Living Materials Center, some permanently and
3 some until a better place could be found; among the 200 to 400
4 regular residents are Blossom the cockatoo, who dances to the song
5 "Barbara Ann," Wilma the turkey buzzard, Louie the bobcat, and Toby
6 the African spur-thighed tortoise; Katy the python, a longtime
7 companion of Mr. Dunlap's who earned him the nickname "the snake
8 man," was a favorite of students until she passed away; although the
9 center will not be the same without Mr. Dunlap's delightful
10 presence, his contributions will forever be reflected in the
11 facility's new name, the Jim Dunlap Living Materials Center; and

12 WHEREAS, Mr. Dunlap's reputation extends well beyond Plano
13 ISD, thanks to his many appearances on cable television and his
14 published works, including nonfiction and children's fiction; in
15 retirement, he will continue to share his insights and knowledge
16 about animals as an employee of the Dallas Zoo; and

17 WHEREAS, Beloved by generations of North Texans, Jim Dunlap
18 inspired in countless students curiosity and excitement about the
19 natural world, and it is indeed a pleasure to honor him for his
20 outstanding service; now, therefore, be it

21 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 82nd Texas
22 Legislature hereby congratulate Jim Dunlap on his retirement from
23 Plano ISD and extend to him sincere best wishes for continued
24 happiness; and, be it further

25 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
26 prepared for Mr. Dunlap as an expression of high regard by the Texas
27 House of Representatives.