

By: Bonnen

H.R. No. 1035

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Legendary aviation research scientist Dr. Leo
2 Windecker of Cedar Park passed away on February 13, 2010, at the age
3 of 88, and residents of Texas and beyond mourned his passing; and

4 WHEREAS, This remarkable man, who was born on July 9, 1921, in
5 Gull Lake, Saskatchewan, grew up in Karnes City, where his father
6 served as a pastor to the German-speaking communities in the area;
7 demonstrating a fascination with aviation even as a teen, he and his
8 brother began making parachutes out of their mother's tablecloths
9 and launching small animals off the steeple of their father's
10 church; and

11 WHEREAS, Leo Windecker served as a medic during World War II
12 and received a commendation for discovering the cause of the
13 amoebic dysentery that was plaguing troops in the South Pacific
14 theater; after being discharged with a Purple Heart for injuries
15 sustained in a Japanese bombing attack, he returned stateside and
16 graduated from The University of Texas Dental School in Houston; he
17 opened his first dental practice in Lake Jackson in 1948; and

18 WHEREAS, Still passionate about aviation, Dr. Windecker took
19 his first flying lesson in 1956 and subsequently started
20 experimenting with composite materials to make stronger and safer
21 airplanes; he eventually closed his practice to concentrate
22 full-time on aviation projects, and in 1960, he earned a research
23 grant from the Dow Chemical Company in Freeport; that same year, his
24 wife, Dr. Fairfax Moody Windecker, also closed her dental practice,

1 and the two spent the rest of their careers on aerodynamic research;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, The Windecker Eagle made its first flight in 1967
4 and won Federal Aviation Administration Certification two years
5 later, setting a standard for all-composite aircraft; three
6 Windecker Eagles are now housed in museums, including the
7 Smithsonian's Udvar-Hazy Center in Washington, D.C.; Dr. Windecker
8 donated his personal Eagle, which he had flown throughout the
9 United States and Canada, to the Lake Jackson Historical Museum,
10 where it is displayed in the rotunda; and

11 WHEREAS, Based on his knowledge that radar passed through
12 fiberglass composites, Dr. Windecker had another world-changing
13 idea and proposed building a radar-invisible airplane for the U.S.
14 Air Force; after two years of research and development, he
15 delivered the YE-5 Stealth prototype in 1973; his company,
16 Windecker Industries of Midland, also contracted with the military
17 to design and build a remotely piloted vehicle for Lockheed
18 Missiles and Space Company; and

19 WHEREAS, Dr. Windecker received 22 U.S. patents and many
20 foreign patents for composite aircraft construction and is widely
21 respected as an aviation pioneer; in 2003, he was inducted into the
22 Texas Aviation Hall of Fame, and he has since been nominated for the
23 National Aviation Hall of Fame; and

24 WHEREAS, Dr. Windecker's wife and longtime collaborator,
25 Fairfax, passed away in 1990; fortunate enough to find love again,
26 he married Julia Kay, and the couple enjoyed a wonderful retirement
27 together, before settling in Cedar Park to be near family; and

1 WHEREAS, Through his extraordinary insights and inventions,
2 Leo Windecker brought great honor to the Lone Star State, and he
3 left behind an inspiring legacy that will continue to resonate for
4 many years to come; now, therefore, be it

5 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 82nd Texas
6 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life of Dr. Leo Windecker and
7 extend deepest sympathy to the members of his family: to his wife,
8 Julia Windecker; to his sons, Moody "Skipper" Hamilton and his
9 wife, Deni, Robert Windecker and his wife, Judy, Ted Windecker and
10 his wife, Charlotte; to his "bonus" children, Dr. Charles "Chocky"
11 Kay and his wife, Kathy, Linda Fulkerson and her husband, Skip, and
12 Anne Hill; to his siblings, the Reverend Arnold Windecker, Dr.
13 Roland Windecker, and Anita Windecker; to his six grandchildren,
14 five "bonus" grandchildren, one great-grandson, and seven "bonus"
15 great-grandchildren; and to his other relatives and friends; and,
16 be it further

17 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
18 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of
19 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Leo
20 Windecker.