

By: Farrar

H.R. No. 1133

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The many friends and admirers of the Honorable
2 William M. Hatten, retired judge of the 176th District Criminal
3 Court in Harris County, are gathering to celebrate his 97th
4 birthday and to honor him for his many years of public service; and

5 WHEREAS, A native of Houston, Bill Hatten was born on August
6 26, 1913, and graduated from St. Thomas High School in 1931; he
7 attended law school at night while working as a salesman and
8 deliveryman, graduating in 1934 and passing the state bar the
9 following year; and

10 WHEREAS, That same year, he entered into the practice of
11 civil and criminal law, and in 1943, he helped to defend German-born
12 Heinrich Meyer in the first denaturalization case in the Southern
13 District of Texas; a highly respected member of the legal
14 profession, he was appointed judge of a family law district court in
15 1964 by Governor John Connally; he was elected to the judgeship
16 later that year and reelected in 1968; and

17 WHEREAS, Three years later, Judge Hatten was appointed by
18 Governor Preston Smith to the 176th District Criminal Court; he was
19 elected the following year and returned to the bench by the voters
20 three more times; during his remarkable tenure, he was assigned the
21 high-profile multiple murder trial of Elmer Wayne Henley and David
22 Owen Brooks; Judge Hatten retired in 1988 at the age of 75 and has
23 since gone on to serve his fellow citizens as a senior and
24 substitute judge; and

1 WHEREAS, Equally accomplished as a community leader, this
2 esteemed Texan has shared his time and talents over the years with a
3 number of civic and charitable organizations; he has served as
4 president of the Texas Society for the Prevention of Blindness and
5 has distinguished himself as a member of the Harris County Juvenile
6 Board for more than two decades, chairing the buildings and grounds
7 committee; in addition, he led Boy Scouts Troop No. 138 and served
8 the scouts as a district vice chair; moreover, he is a former member
9 of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program board; and

10 WHEREAS, Judge Hatten has been a major force in the Fraternal
11 Order of Eagles for more than three quarters of a century, serving
12 as president of his local and state aeries as well as coordinating
13 the Fraternal Order of Eagles 1979 national telethon to raise money
14 for the Bob Hope School for children with disabilities in Port
15 Arthur; he also holds life membership in the American Legion and the
16 Veterans of Foreign Wars; and

17 WHEREAS, A man of strong faith, Judge Hatten is a longtime
18 member of All Saints Catholic Church in Houston and has been active
19 in the Knights of Columbus for more than 75 years; he helped to
20 organize the Catholic War Veterans of Houston and served as that
21 group's president and was the first president of the Northwest
22 Serra Club, an evangelical Catholic organization; and

23 WHEREAS, In all his endeavors, Bill Hatten enjoys the love
24 and support of his wife of more than 70 years, Dorothy, and they
25 take great pride in their family, which includes 5 children, 9
26 grandchildren, and 10 great-grandchildren; together the couple
27 have collected more than 10,000 books and magazines for

1 distribution to jails and hospitals, and they have delighted in
2 creating a haunted house for area children each Halloween; and

3 WHEREAS, Though it is impossible to gauge the full effect of a
4 man's life, some individuals leave their unmistakable mark on the
5 world as they move through it, and Bill Hatten's contributions to
6 his fellow Texans continue to resonate in the lives of all who know
7 him; now, therefore, be it

8 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 82nd Texas
9 Legislature hereby congratulate the Honorable William M. Hatten on
10 97 years of life well lived and extend to him profound appreciation
11 for his many good works; and, be it further

12 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
13 prepared for Judge Hatten as an expression of high regard by the
14 Texas House of Representatives.