

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 353

In Memory
of
Ernest Frank Bennett, Jr.

WHEREAS, The Senate of the State of Texas joins the citizens of Corpus Christi in mourning the loss of the Reverend Ernest Frank Bennett, Jr., who died February 12, 2011, at the age of 89; and

WHEREAS, Ernest Bennett, Jr., was born August 21, 1921, to Dr. Ernest Frank Bennett, Sr., and Julia Katherine Bell Bennett; he graduated from Phyllis Wheatley High School in San Antonio, later receiving a degree from the University of California Los Angeles and a bachelor of divinity degree from the University of Chicago Divinity School; he also received numerous honorary degrees over the years; and

WHEREAS, He served valiantly in the United States Army during World War II; before his call to the ministry, he had a varied career, including being a professional saxophonist with various orchestras; he was an editorial writer for newspapers, including the *Corpus Christi Caller-Times* and was a contributing editor to the *Pulpit Digest* and the author of *Character Counts: Do You Agree?*; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Bennett served as a pastor at Mount Zion Baptist Church in Robstown and Mount Pilgrim Baptist Church in Refugio, and at other churches in several states; he was associate pastor at Rising Star Baptist Church in Corpus Christi; he was an active chaplain for the Corpus Christi City Council and for the police department; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Bennett, "E. F." as many called him, was a respected leader in the community; many organizations benefited from his wise counsel, including the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Urban League, the Lighthouse for the Blind, the Corpus Christi City Employees Credit Union, Goodwill Industries, the American Legion, and Veterans of Foreign Wars; and

WHEREAS, He was a longtime advocate for minorities and those who were poor; education was always important to him and he taught in the Robstown and West Oso public school systems and the Corpus Christi Independent School District; he helped establish a scholarship fund that is administered by the Coastal Bend Community Foundation; and

WHEREAS, The Reverend E. F. Bennett was a highly respected church and community leader who had a positive influence on the lives of many people; he was a devoted husband, father, and grandfather, and he leaves behind memories that will be treasured forever by his family and all those who had the good fortune to know him; now, therefore, be it

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RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 82nd Legislature, hereby pay tribute to the life of the Reverend Ernest Frank Bennett, Jr., and extend sincere condolences to his bereaved family: his wife of 48 years, Ikoza Marie Bennett; his sons, Ernest F. Bennett III and Stephan Bennett; and his 23 grandchildren and many great-grandchildren; 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 the Reverend Ernest Frank Bennett, Jr.

Hinojosa

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on February 23, 2011, by a rising vote.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate