

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 536

In Memory
of
William E. Nelson

WHEREAS, The Senate of the State of Texas joins the citizens of Waco in mourning the loss of World War II veteran William E. Nelson, Jr., who died March 10, 2011, at the age of 93; and

WHEREAS, William E. Nelson was born November 30, 1917, in Gunter, Texas; he was orphaned early in his life and was forced to live on the streets, with relatives, and in foster homes; he did not allow his unfortunate circumstances to interfere with his schooling, and he graduated from Celina High School, where he was a popular young man, was elected class president, starred in the class play, and played quarterback on the football team; he was recruited to attend North Texas State Teachers College in Denton on a football scholarship; and

WHEREAS, After the country was attacked at Pearl Harbor, Mr. Nelson volunteered for the United States Army Air Corps; based in Italy in 1944, he completed 50 missions as a top turret gunner on a B-24 Liberator attacking some of Europe's most protected and important targets; he and his crewmates risked their lives daily and played a vital role in helping American ground forces move toward the German capitol of Berlin to end the war in the European Theater; and

WHEREAS, After having been honorably discharged, Mr. Nelson was awarded several medals for his military service, but he did not pursue receiving them; in 2007, some 62 years after he earned them, his medals were presented to him by a military activist and veteran at a reception held for him by his family and friends; and

WHEREAS, After returning to civilian life, Mr. Nelson worked for the Veterans Administration Regional Office in Dallas and later in Waco for more than 30 years; he was passionately dedicated to ensuring that veterans received the benefits they had earned; and

WHEREAS, After he retired, Mr. Nelson enjoyed spending time with his grandchildren, working in his garden, and traveling with his wife of 58 years, the late Leola Hill Nelson; he was an active member of First United Methodist Church of Waco and a beloved member of his Sunday School class; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Nelson was a kind and generous man who was always available to help neighbors, friends, family, fellow church members, and even strangers; no task was too daunting for him if someone was in need; and

S.R. No. 536

WHEREAS, A beloved and respected member of his community, William Nelson was a devoted father and grandfather, and he leaves behind memories that will be treasured forever by his family and his many friends; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 82nd Legislature, hereby extend sincere condolences to the bereaved family of William E. Nelson, Jr.: his daughters and sons-in-law, Constance and Tom Pothier and Sally and Bobby McGowan; his son, William E. Nelson III; his eight grandchildren; and many other beloved relatives and friends; 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 William E. Nelson, Jr.

Birdwell

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on March 16, 2011, by a rising vote.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate