

By: Eiland

H.R. No. 5

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The State of Texas lost an admired philanthropist
2 and energy industry giant with the passing of George Phydias
3 Mitchell of Galveston on July 26, 2013, at the age of 94; and

4 WHEREAS, The son of Greek immigrants, Mr. Mitchell was born
5 in Galveston in 1919; he worked his way through Texas A&M
6 University, selling candy and stationery and running a tailoring
7 and laundry business; after graduating first in his class with a
8 degree in petroleum engineering and geology, he served his country
9 in the Army Corps of Engineers during World War II, attaining the
10 rank of captain; and

11 WHEREAS, This dynamic Texan joined a newly formed wildcatting
12 company in 1949 as a consulting geologist and engineer; he became a
13 partner in the firm and was then named president in 1959; under his
14 skillful leadership as chair and chief executive officer, Mitchell
15 Energy & Development Corporation evolved into one of the nation's
16 largest independent oil and gas producers; the company was listed
17 on the New York Stock Exchange before its merger in 2002 with Devon
18 Energy Corporation; and

19 WHEREAS, Recognized as the father of hydraulic fracturing,
20 Mr. Mitchell pioneered drilling and completion technologies that
21 transformed the energy industry; for nearly two decades, he
22 overcame setbacks and ignored naysayers while perfecting methods of
23 extracting natural gas from the Barnett Shale formation in
24 commercial quantities; his foresight and dogged determination

1 engendered an industry revolution that has vastly increased global
2 supply and enhanced the energy security of North America; and

3 WHEREAS, Mr. Mitchell also enjoyed tremendous success as a
4 real estate developer of rare ambition and imagination; in 1974, he
5 established The Woodlands, a 28,000-acre master-planned community
6 designed to preserve East Texas forest and other natural resources
7 while integrating mixed-income residential development with an
8 employment center; the city today is home to about 100,000 people
9 and a number of corporations, and it is recognized for the beauty of
10 its protected green space, which represents a quarter of its total
11 area; and

12 WHEREAS, The devoted father of 10, Mr. Mitchell joined with
13 his wife, Cynthia Woods Mitchell, to help make the world a better
14 place for future generations; in 1978, the couple created the
15 Cynthia and George Mitchell Foundation to support innovative,
16 sustainable solutions for human and environmental problems; since
17 its inception, the foundation has distributed or pledged more than
18 \$400 million to a variety of worthy causes, including the promotion
19 of sustainability science and clean energy, Cook's Branch
20 Conservancy, and the Mitchell Institute for Fundamental Physics and
21 Astronomy at Texas A&M; and

22 WHEREAS, Mr. Mitchell became the most generous benefactor in
23 the history of his alma mater, with donations that included the land
24 for the university's campus in Galveston; in addition, he spent
25 tens of millions rebuilding his hometown, funding the restoration
26 of the historic Strand District and resurrecting a long-dormant
27 Mardi Gras tradition that now brings 500,000 visitors to the city

1 annually; and

2 WHEREAS, In his later years, Mr. Mitchell focused
3 increasingly on charitable endeavors; he made the Giving Pledge, a
4 commitment promoted by Warren Buffett and Bill and Melinda Gates,
5 making public the intent he and his late wife had formed to donate
6 the majority of their wealth to philanthropic initiatives;
7 moreover, he advocated powerfully for tighter regulation of and
8 safer practices in the conduct of hydraulic fracturing; and

9 WHEREAS, George Mitchell left an indelible imprint on the
10 nation as a true visionary of the energy industry, and through his
11 exceptional dedication to environmental protection, social equity,
12 and economic prosperity, he made important contributions that will
13 long continue to resonate in the Lone Star State and beyond; now,
14 therefore, be it

15 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 83rd Texas
16 Legislature, 3rd Called Session, hereby pay tribute to the
17 remarkable life of George P. Mitchell and extend sincere
18 condolences to his loved ones; and, be it further

19 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
20 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of
21 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of George
22 Phydias Mitchell.