

By: Branch

H.C.R. No. 100

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1           WHEREAS, The Honorable Jack Pope, a retired chief justice of  
2 the Texas Supreme Court, is celebrating his 100th birthday on April  
3 18, 2013, and this occasion provides an ideal opportunity to  
4 recognize his immeasurable service to the Lone Star State; and

5           WHEREAS, At 100, Chief Justice Pope is by all accounts the  
6 oldest living former state supreme court chief justice in modern  
7 American history and the first to reach the century mark; he served  
8 as a judge in trial and appellate courts for 38 years, giving him  
9 the longest judicial tenure of any Texas Supreme Court justice; and

10           WHEREAS, During his exemplary service on the Court of Civil  
11 Appeals in San Antonio, Chief Justice Pope reshaped Texas water law  
12 by defining the Spanish roots of water grants in a seminal opinion  
13 subsequently adopted by the Texas Supreme Court as its own, a rarity  
14 in the annals of the court; years later, author James A. Michener  
15 sought his expertise on the important role of water when  
16 researching his acclaimed historical novel *Texas*; and

17           WHEREAS, This remarkable jurist began his career before the  
18 advent of formal judicial training; his quest to educate himself in  
19 the field led him to become a powerful advocate for professional  
20 education for all Texas judges, a mission now carried on by the  
21 Texas Center for the Judiciary; his efforts culminated in the  
22 establishment of compulsory continuing judicial education and the  
23 adoption of the Texas Code of Judicial Conduct by the Supreme Court  
24 of Texas; and

1           WHEREAS, Committed to the principle of justice for all  
2 Texans, Chief Justice Pope created a means to fund legal assistance  
3 for the poor; he devised a system to channel interest earned on  
4 attorneys' client-trust accounts for the benefit of legal aid  
5 organizations in the state; and

6           WHEREAS, His profound reputation for judicial integrity and  
7 principled decision-making prompted his former Supreme Court  
8 colleague Thomas M. Reavley to call Chief Justice Pope the greatest  
9 jurist with whom he has served; this is high tribute indeed from  
10 Judge Reavley, who has worked with judges on all but one of the 11  
11 regional federal circuits in the United States, and who now has  
12 senior status on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit;  
13 and

14           WHEREAS, A cofounder of the Texas Supreme Court Historical  
15 Society, Chief Justice Pope now is its chair emeritus; the  
16 organization will soon publish a collection of his writings under a  
17 title referencing his proud description of himself as a "common  
18 law" judge; this volume will be the first in a new judicial history  
19 series; and

20           WHEREAS, Born and reared in Abilene, Chief Justice Pope knew  
21 from the time he was a boy that he wanted to be a lawyer; as a youth,  
22 he also showed the passion for learning that later marked his  
23 distinguished career and that led him to champion judicial  
24 education; he was a voracious reader and found inspiration in such  
25 figures as the Roman historian Tacitus and orator Cicero and in the  
26 American legal scholars Roscoe Pound and Oliver Wendell Holmes,  
27 Jr.; and

1           WHEREAS, Jack Pope graduated from Abilene High School in 1930  
2 and went on to attend Abilene Christian College, where he majored in  
3 speech, earned letters as a member of the debate and tennis teams,  
4 and served as president of the junior class and the student  
5 association; subsequently, at The University of Texas School of  
6 Law, he served as editor of the *Texas Law Review*; and

7           WHEREAS, Licensed by the bar in 1937, Chief Justice Pope  
8 moved to Corpus Christi and joined the firm of his uncle, former  
9 state representative Walter E. Pope; he quickly gained wide-ranging  
10 experience in civil and criminal law and in New Deal-era labor and  
11 transportation regulatory law; and

12           WHEREAS, He served in the U.S. Navy Reserve for two years at  
13 the end of World War II; upon returning to Corpus Christi in 1946,  
14 he resumed the practice of law, but later that year, at the age of  
15 33, he was appointed judge of the 94th District Court; he was the  
16 youngest district judge then serving in Texas; and

17           WHEREAS, In 1950, Chief Justice Pope won the first of three  
18 consecutive terms to the Court of Civil Appeals in San Antonio, the  
19 first justice who was from south of Bexar County to be elected to  
20 that court; he won election to the Supreme Court of Texas in 1964,  
21 and during his years as an associate justice, he not only led  
22 efforts for judicial and procedural reform, but also helped to  
23 draft significant rulings on property rights; in 1982, Governor  
24 Bill Clements appointed him chief justice, an office he held until  
25 his retirement in 1985; and

26           WHEREAS, Known for the lucidity of his thought and writing,  
27 he published more than 1,000 judicial opinions and over 70

1 law-related articles over the course of his career; and

2         WHEREAS, Since stepping down from the bench some 28 years  
3 ago, Chief Justice Pope has continued an active life; he has served  
4 as president of the *Christian Chronicle* National Council, an  
5 advisory body created to serve the international newspaper of the  
6 Churches of Christ, and coedited a volume about his ancestor John  
7 Berry, a notable Texas pioneer; in 2011, he published *My Little*  
8 *United Nations*, paying fond tribute to the multicultural team of  
9 dedicated assistants and caregivers who have nurtured his soul and  
10 body; and

11         WHEREAS, Chief Justice Pope credits Abilene Christian  
12 University with providing an essential foundation for his success  
13 in life, and in return for the invaluable lessons he learned there,  
14 he has been one of that school's staunchest supporters; he joined  
15 the ACU Board of Trustees in 1954 and for many years served on the  
16 senior board; and

17         WHEREAS, In tribute to its esteemed graduate, ACU has  
18 conferred on Chief Justice Pope its Outstanding Alumnus of the Year  
19 award, as well as its Change the World award; moreover, since 1989,  
20 the school has bestowed scholarships on outstanding students who  
21 are intending to pursue a career in public service, designating  
22 them as Jack Pope Fellows; and

23         WHEREAS, Another institution that has benefited from Chief  
24 Justice Pope's active involvement is the State Law Library, which  
25 was created as a separate state agency in 1971 largely through his  
26 efforts; Chief Justice Pope has served as a member emeritus of the  
27 Friends of the State Law Library Board of Directors, and the Friends

1 have recognized him and another former chief justice, the late Joe  
2 Greenhill, with the establishment of the Greenhill-Pope Law Book  
3 Fund; and

4 WHEREAS, Chief Justice Pope is the recipient of four honorary  
5 degrees and countless other accolades; in 2009, the Texas Center  
6 for Legal Ethics presented him with its first Chief Justice Jack  
7 Pope Professionalism Award, and in 2010 the judicial section of the  
8 State Bar of Texas honored him with its inaugural Judicial Lifetime  
9 Achievement Award; and

10 WHEREAS, From their marriage in 1938 until her passing in  
11 2004, Jack Pope and his wife, Allene, shared a richly rewarding  
12 union; their family today includes two sons, Allen and Jackson  
13 Pope, two grandsons, Drew and Ryan Pope, and two  
14 great-grandchildren, Dylan and Peyton Locke; and

15 WHEREAS, Greatly admired for his intellect and integrity,  
16 Chief Justice Pope has contributed significantly to jurisprudence  
17 in the State of Texas, and it is indeed a privilege to join in  
18 wishing him well on this special day; now, therefore, be it

19 RESOLVED, That the 83rd Legislature of the State of Texas  
20 hereby commend the Honorable Jack Pope for his exceptional service  
21 to the Lone Star State and congratulate him on the momentous  
22 occasion of his 100th birthday; and, be it further

23 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
24 prepared for Chief Justice Pope as an expression of high regard by  
25 the Texas House of Representatives and Senate.