

By: Dutton

H.R. No. 726

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The city of Houston lost one of its most admired and
2 beloved artists with the death of Bert Long, Jr., on February 1,
3 2013, at the age of 72; and

4 WHEREAS, Born in the Bayou City in 1940, Bert Long helped
5 raise his siblings after his father died, picking cotton in the
6 summers as a young child and working at the Houston Club throughout
7 his years at Phillis Wheatley High School; he went on to serve his
8 country for six years as a member of the U.S. Marines and
9 subsequently attended culinary school in Los Angeles; he had a
10 successful career as an executive chef, at one point opening his
11 own restaurant, Big Bert's, in Oregon, and later working on the
12 staff of the MGM Grand in Las Vegas; and

13 WHEREAS, At the age of 39, with a wife and three children,
14 Mr. Long left kitchens behind to follow his long-held dream of
15 becoming an artist; he and his family traveled the western United
16 States in a motor home, stopping at every art festival they could
17 find; Mr. Long tried to support his loved ones from sales of his
18 artwork, but eventually was forced to fall back on his culinary
19 skills and took a job at the Chicago Ritz Carlton; returning to
20 Houston, he continued to cook for a living while persisting with his
21 creative endeavors; his paintings began to sell at the Westheimer
22 Arts Festival, and he soon became the recipient of awards and
23 grants; and

24 WHEREAS, Mr. Long won the prestigious Rome Prize in 1990 and

1 was invited to spend time at the American Academy in Rome, where he
2 further refined his artistic identity in the company of other
3 artists; he later lived and worked in Spain for a time, along with
4 his wife, and the couple came to deeply appreciate Spanish culture;
5 and

6 WHEREAS, Back in his hometown, Mr. Long created several
7 permanent public projects, including a large mural titled *Art/Life*,
8 which is at the Looscan Neighborhood Library, and a sculpture
9 installation, *Field of Vision*, which is at Project Row Houses; as he
10 gained more attention, his work was acquired by the Metropolitan
11 Museum of Art in New York City, the Blanton Museum in Austin, the
12 Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and the Galerie Dario Boccara in
13 Paris, France, among other institutions; and

14 WHEREAS, Mr. Long enjoyed a rewarding marriage with his first
15 wife, Connie, who passed away in 1998; fortunate to find love again,
16 he shared many years with his second wife, the artist Joan Batson;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, A Renaissance man who was also known for his wit, his
19 warmth, and his support of others, Bert Long saw the world as being
20 full of possibility and inspired countless people with his
21 artistry, vision, and determination to follow his dreams; now,
22 therefore, be it

23 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 83rd Texas
24 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life of Bert Long, Jr., and
25 extend sincere condolences to his family, to his friends, and to his
26 many other admirers across the Lone Star State and beyond; and, be
27 it further

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1 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
2 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of
3 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Bert Long,
4 Jr.