

By: Smith

H.R. No. 755

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Friends and family are mourning the loss of
2 W. A. Orton, Jr., of Baytown, who died on October 25, 2012, at the
3 age of 86; and

4 WHEREAS, "Skeeter" Orton was born on March 1, 1926, in
5 Baytown, and his keen interest in sports was evident from an early
6 age, when he became a bat boy for a local semipro baseball team; he
7 played football at Robert E. Lee High School and Stephen F. Austin
8 State University, and went on to earn his bachelor's degree in
9 government and physical education at Sam Houston State University,
10 where he presided over the Baytown Club; during his service in the
11 U.S. Army, Mr. Orton joined a military football team that won the
12 European championship in Germany; and

13 WHEREAS, Following his discharge, he went to work for the
14 Humble Oil and Refining Company, later known as Exxon; he retired in
15 1986; and

16 WHEREAS, Mr. Orton's passion for athletics continued through
17 his involvement in youth sports, and he mentored hundreds of boys
18 while coaching baseball, football, and basketball; he dedicated
19 many long hours to giving instruction on the finer points of games,
20 and with his kindness, patience, and calm demeanor, he taught
21 lessons that went far beyond sports; he was honored for his work
22 with the Baytown Community Service Award and the Optimist Youth
23 Club Award; and

24 WHEREAS, Throughout his life, Mr. Orton was deeply engaged in

1 his community; he was a charter member of the Bay Area Heritage
2 Society and held a place on the inaugural board of directors of the
3 Baytown YMCA; he served as an assistant scoutmaster and worked with
4 the East Harris District Scout Board and the Sam Houston Area
5 Council; in addition, he was a valued member of the board of
6 directors of the Hill Country ExxonMobil Retirees Club; and

7 WHEREAS, Mr. Orton also took great pleasure in attending
8 sports events, and he was such a well-known fan in Fredericksburg
9 that he received a Spirit Stick citation from the high school
10 cheerleaders and was asked to throw out the first pitch at several
11 baseball contests; other pastimes he enjoyed included listening to
12 music, going to movies, reading, and studying history; and

13 WHEREAS, For nearly six decades, he enjoyed the love and
14 support of his wife, the former Wanda Jones, whom he met when they
15 acted together in a play at Lee College; married in 1954, the couple
16 were blessed with a daughter, Jan, and their family later grew to
17 include a granddaughter, Olivia, and a grandson, Scott; and

18 WHEREAS, A beloved mentor known for his optimism and an
19 infectious smile, Skeeter Orton was a positive influence in the
20 lives of countless young people, and he leaves behind a legacy that
21 will resonate in the community for years to come; now, therefore, be
22 it

23 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 83rd Texas
24 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life of W. A. Orton, Jr., and
25 extend sincere condolences to the members of his family: to his
26 wife, Wanda Orton; to his daughter, Jan McGowen; to his
27 grandchildren, Olivia and Scott McGowen; and to his other relatives

1 and many friends; and, be it further

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