

By: Sheets

H.R. No. 1039

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The Lone Star State lost a respected educator with
2 the death of former Mesquite Independent School District
3 superintendent Dr. Ralph Harris Poteet, who passed away on
4 September 23, 2012, at the age of 86; and

5 WHEREAS, Born in Desdemona on July 12, 1926, to Sybil and
6 William Poteet, Ralph Poteet attended Stephenville High School and
7 graduated from Southwestern University in Georgetown; he served his
8 country in World War II and continued his education with graduate
9 studies at The University of Texas at Austin and UT Arlington; he
10 received his doctorate from East Texas State University; and

11 WHEREAS, Dr. Poteet began his career in education in Bartlett
12 in 1949, serving as a teacher, coach, and principal; he moved to
13 Mesquite in 1955 to work as the head football coach, and five years
14 later he was appointed business manager for the district; he served
15 as assistant superintendent before being named district
16 superintendent in 1964; and

17 WHEREAS, For 22 years, Dr. Poteet oversaw Mesquite ISD, ably
18 guiding district schools through a period of significant growth;
19 during his tenure, the district expanded to include 29 schools, and
20 30 new buildings were constructed on area campuses; Dr. Poteet was
21 an energetic and visionary administrator who emphasized discipline
22 and hard work, and he helped the district become one of the most
23 innovative school systems in Texas, establishing the first public
24 school radio station, along with a public school television station

1 and a planetarium that were also among the earliest in the state;
2 moreover, he created a school-community partnership program that
3 established a park along with each new school; and

4 WHEREAS, Dr. Poteet was recognized with numerous awards for
5 his leadership, including a Texas Superintendent of the Year
6 regional award, the National Leadership Award from the National
7 School Development Council, and the Outstanding Leadership Award
8 from Phi Delta Kappa International, and he was named Mesquite
9 Citizen of the Year twice; for his retirement in 1986, President
10 Ronald Reagan, Texas Governor Mark White, and many other elected
11 officials sent congratulatory letters; moreover, a new high school,
12 the fourth in the district, was named for him, and his initials of
13 RHP inspired the school's motto, "Respect, Honor, and Pride"; and

14 WHEREAS, Following his retirement, Dr. Poteet continued to
15 serve as a consultant with the district; he published articles on
16 education in several magazines and served as an adjunct professor
17 at East Texas State University; he further shared his time and
18 talents as the chair of Keep Mesquite Beautiful, as a director of
19 the Dallas County Appraisal District and the Christian Care Center,
20 and as a member of the local Lions Club and chamber of commerce and
21 the North Texas Council of Governments; and

22 WHEREAS, A man of faith, Dr. Poteet belonged to the Church of
23 Christ and served his congregation as a deacon and elder; in all of
24 his endeavors, he enjoyed the love and support of his wife of 65
25 years, Anne Thomas Poteet, and he took great pride in their
26 daughter, Carol Anne Tipton, and her husband, Steve, as well as in
27 their grandsons, Casey, Jake, and Zach Tipton; and

1 WHEREAS, Deeply devoted to his family, his profession, and
2 his community, Dr. Ralph Poteet made a positive difference in the
3 lives of countless area Texans, and he leaves behind a legacy that
4 will resonate for years to come; now, therefore, be it

5 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 83rd Texas
6 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the memory of Dr. Ralph Poteet and
7 extend deepest sympathy to his friends and loved ones; and, be it
8 further

9 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
10 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of
11 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Dr. Ralph
12 Poteet.