

By: Pickett

H.R. No. 1983

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Friends, loved ones, and television fans across the
2 nation will forever treasure their memories of actor Sherman
3 Hemsley, who died in El Paso on July 24, 2012, at the age of 74; and

4 WHEREAS, Born in Philadelphia on February 1, 1938, Sherman
5 Alexander Hemsley studied as a teenager at the Philadelphia Academy
6 of Dramatic Arts; he dropped out of high school to serve in the
7 U.S. Air Force for four years, then returned to Philadelphia to
8 work for the U.S. Post Office while continuing to study acting at
9 night; and

10 WHEREAS, Mr. Hemsley moved to New York to pursue an acting
11 career, and as a member of the Negro Ensemble Company and the Urban
12 Arts Company, he appeared in a number of productions, including *The*
13 *Lottery*, *Old Judge Mose Is Dead*, and *Step Lively Boys*; in 1970, he
14 made his Broadway debut as Gitlow in the musical *Purlie*; and

15 WHEREAS, During a national tour of the show, Mr. Hemsley was
16 approached by television producer Norman Lear to play a character
17 on the groundbreaking situation comedy *All in the Family*; he joined
18 the cast in 1973 as the blustering and pompous George Jefferson;
19 this character and his wife, Louise, played by Isabel Sanford, were
20 such a success that they became the stars of their own show, *The*
21 *Jeffersons*, which ran for 11 seasons, earning Mr. Hemsley
22 nominations for the Emmy and the Golden Globe; and

23 WHEREAS, *The Jeffersons* went off the air in 1985, and
24 Mr. Hemsley went on to play a scheming church deacon on the sitcom

1 *Amen*, voice a triceratops on the live-action puppet series,
2 *Dinosaurs*, and make guest appearances on *The Fresh Prince of*
3 *Bel-Air*, *Sister, Sister*, *Family Guy*, and *Tyler Perry's House of*
4 *Payne*; as one of the most beloved fictional couples in TV history,
5 he and Ms. Sanford reprised their signature roles in commercials
6 for The Gap, Old Navy, and Denny's, and they toured together in the
7 stage show *The Real Live Jeffersons*; he was inducted into the
8 Television Hall of Fame in 2012; and

9 WHEREAS, In later years, Mr. Hemsley, who was more reserved
10 than the character who made him famous, enjoyed a quiet life in El
11 Paso, where he made many friends and became active in local
12 charities; after his death, befitting his service to his country,
13 he was buried with military honors at Fort Bliss National Cemetery;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, A gifted and energetic performer on the stage and
16 the screen, Sherman Hemsley was in private life a modest and deeply
17 spiritual man who took great pleasure in music and the company of
18 his friends, and he leaves behind a legacy of laughter that
19 continues to delight countless fans; now, therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 83rd Texas
21 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life and career of Sherman
22 Hemsley and extend sincere condolences to his friends and loved
23 ones; and, be it further

24 RESOLVED, That when the Texas House of Representatives
25 adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Sherman Hemsley.