

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 1086

In Memory
of
Harvey Lavan Cliburn, Jr.

WHEREAS, The Senate of the State of Texas joins the citizens of Texas and classical music aficionados around the world in mourning the loss of legendary pianist Harvey Lavan "Van" Cliburn, Jr., who died February 27, 2013, at the age of 78; and

WHEREAS, Van Cliburn was an exceptional Texan who made Fort Worth an international mecca for classical musicians; he was beloved the world over for both his talent and his humility; and

WHEREAS, As a young man of 23, he won the hearts and minds of Soviet citizens when he claimed the first Tchaikovsky International Piano Competition title in Moscow in 1958; his performance elicited an eight-minute standing ovation; soon after that triumph, his recording of the Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 1 became the first classical album to go platinum; in 1962 the quadrennial Van Cliburn International Piano Competition was launched in Fort Worth, and it has become a prestigious event that now rivals its Russian counterpart; and

WHEREAS, Born July 12, 1934, Van Cliburn began playing piano at the age of three; coached by his mother, Rildia, who was a talented pianist in her own right, he gave his first public performance at the age of four; when he was 12 years old, he debuted with the Houston Symphony, and when he was 20, he played his first Carnegie Hall concert; he won a Grammy Award at the age of 23; and

WHEREAS, Despite his acclaim, Van Cliburn was exceedingly humble; he performed for every American president from Harry Truman to Barack Obama, yet he was unfailingly modest and gracious; a man of great warmth and sincerity, he was a faithful member of Broadway Baptist Church in Fort Worth; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Cliburn inspired loyalty and affection among people from all walks of life; he was presented with the Order of Friendship by Russian President Vladimir Putin and was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President George W. Bush and the National Medal of the Arts by President Barack Obama; he also received the Kennedy Center Honors and the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award; Van Cliburn was beloved by millions, and he will long be revered for his outstanding contributions to classical music and to Texas culture; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 83rd Legislature, hereby extend sincere condolences to the bereaved family and friends of Harvey Lavan "Van" Cliburn and declare the dates of the upcoming quadrennial Van Cliburn International Piano Competition, May 24 through June 9, 2013, as Van Cliburn Days in Texas; and, be it further

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RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be prepared for his loved ones as an expression of deepest sympathy from the Texas Senate, and that when the Senate adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Van Cliburn.

Davis, Birdwell,
Hancock, Nelson

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on May 26, 2013, by a rising vote.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate

Member, Texas Senate

Member, Texas Senate

Member, Texas Senate