

By: Clardy

H.R. No. 178

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Nacogdoches lost one of its most admired civic
2 leaders with the passing of former mayor James E. Raney on June 21,
3 2014, at the age of 74; and

4 WHEREAS, The son of James Nathan Raney and Maurine Key Raney,
5 James Raney was born in Madisonville on February 25, 1940; the
6 family relocated to Huntsville in 1950, and he graduated from
7 Huntsville High School; after completing his bachelor's degree, he
8 served his country in the United States Army and Army Reserve for
9 six years, attaining the rank of first lieutenant; and

10 WHEREAS, Mr. Raney married his childhood sweetheart, the
11 former Sandra Hill, on January 27, 1962, and they became the proud
12 parents of two daughters, Penny and Julie; in 1966, the couple moved
13 to Nacogdoches, where they opened the Varsity Book Store, an
14 enterprise they continued to run for nearly four decades; Mr. Raney
15 was an especially kind and caring employer, and he was a mentor and
16 role model to many young people; following the death of his wife in
17 2009, he was fortunate enough to find love again with the former
18 Vida Lynne Kowalski, and they wed on June 23, 2012; and

19 WHEREAS, Deeply committed to his community, Mr. Raney
20 devoted much of his life to public service; he was a trustee of the
21 Nacogdoches Independent School District for nine years and served
22 as its president, and during a decadelong tenure on the city
23 commission, he served for two years as mayor; moreover, he was a
24 member of the Criminal Justice Task Force Commission, and Governor

1 Bill Clements also appointed him twice as chair of the Deep East
2 Texas Council of Governments Regional Review Committee; he was
3 later named to the board of the Angelina and Neches River Authority
4 by Governor Rick Perry; and

5 WHEREAS, This dynamic Texan gave freely of his time and
6 talents as master of Milam Lodge No. 2, as a member of all York Rite
7 Bodies, as a 32nd degree Scottish Rite Mason, and as a Shriner; in
8 addition, he belonged to Safari Club International, and he was a
9 life member of both the Texas State Rifle Association and the
10 National Rifle Association; he was on the board of the Nacogdoches
11 Rotary Club, and he served as president of the Nacogdoches Booster
12 Club; moreover, he was a member of the Sons of the Republic of
13 Texas; a faithful Episcopalian, he was a senior warden at Christ
14 Church, where he served on the Vestry; and

15 WHEREAS, Setting an inspiring example of warmth, compassion,
16 and integrity, James Raney was a true gentleman, and he
17 demonstrated good will and generosity toward all; his legacy of
18 service will continue to resonate in his hometown and beyond, and
19 those who were fortunate enough to know him will forever remember
20 the tremendous positive influence he had on their lives; now,
21 therefore, be it

22 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 84th Texas
23 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the memory of James E. Raney and
24 extend sincere condolences to the members of his family: to his
25 wife, Vida Lynne Kowalski Raney; to his daughters, Penny Raney and
26 Julie Raney Williams and her husband, Kirby; to his grandchildren,
27 Kate, Claire, and Dray Schmidt and Sam, Avery, and Zoe Williams; to

1 his brother, State Representative John N. Raney, and his wife,
2 Elizabeth; to his sisters, Theda Raney Flournoy and Eileen Thrash
3 and her husband, John; and to his other relatives and many friends;
4 and, be it further

5 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
6 prepared for the members of his family and that when the Texas House
7 of Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of James E.
8 Raney.