

By: Anderson of McLennan

H.R. No. 1269

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Countless lives were touched by the inspirational
2 leadership of Bishop Arthur LaDell Thomas of Waco, who passed away
3 on November 11, 2014, at the age of 81; and

4 WHEREAS, A. LaDell Thomas was born in Waco on August 13, 1933,
5 to Ira and Vinetta Thomas; answering the call to the ministry, he
6 accepted his first pastoral assignment at a rural church in
7 Caldwell; he felt drawn back to his hometown to continue his work in
8 1956, and he was later named superintendent for the Central Texas
9 Pentecostal District; and

10 WHEREAS, In 1987, A. LaDell Thomas was appointed and
11 consecrated a bishop in the Church of God in Christ; while he
12 devoted his life to spreading a message of faith, he was involved in
13 the civil rights struggle in segregated McLennan County; active in
14 the NAACP, he joined other African American leaders in pressing for
15 greater minority representation on the Waco City Council, and he
16 encouraged other citizens to take to the polls as a means of
17 ensuring that their voices were heard; and

18 WHEREAS, A former college instructor and school
19 administrator, Bishop Thomas believed fervently in the power of
20 education in securing a better life; he was the first African
21 American to serve on the board of the La Vega Independent School
22 District, and he personally counseled young people in his effort to
23 steer them on the right path; and

24 WHEREAS, This esteemed clergyman led Deliverance and Praise

1 Temple Church of God in Christ in Harker Heights as pastor for close
2 to a quarter-century; guiding a congregation that was primarily
3 composed of military personnel, he was admired for his wisdom and
4 for the humor that he often incorporated into his lessons; during
5 his long tenure, he was present for the deployments and homecomings
6 of numerous members of his flock, and he continued to correspond
7 with them while they were away in distant lands; and

8 WHEREAS, Bishop Thomas was the devoted husband of Elnora
9 Thomas, with whom he lovingly raised six children; as a father, he
10 stressed the need for perseverance in overcoming challenges in
11 life, and he knew the delight of seeing his children follow in his
12 footsteps to enter work in the ministry; when asked, he could always
13 be counted on to attend prayer services and events within his
14 community, and he was an empathetic listener who ensured that those
15 who came to him felt valued and appreciated; and

16 WHEREAS, Though he did not seek recognition for his
17 achievements, Bishop A. LaDell Thomas was renowned among his fellow
18 citizens as a dedicated spiritual leader and a dynamic force for
19 good; he will be greatly missed by all who walked with him along his
20 journey, and the compassion and insight that he shared will remain a
21 source of comfort and joy for many years to come; now, therefore, be
22 it

23 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 84th Texas
24 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the memory of Arthur LaDell
25 Thomas and extend deepest sympathy to the members of his family: to
26 his wife, Elnora Massey Thomas; to his children, Bishop A. LaDell
27 Thomas Jr. and his wife, Tihara, Supervisor Joyce L. Campbell and

1 her husband, John, District Missionary Nora Kay Thomas,
2 Superintendent Vayne Thomas and his wife, Yolanda, Pastor Reginald
3 K. Thomas Sr. and his wife, Johnnie, and Superintendent Richard L.
4 Thomas Sr. and his wife, Lillian; to his grandchildren,
5 great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren; and to his
6 other relatives and friends; and, be it further

7 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
8 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of
9 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of A. LaDell
10 Thomas.