

By: Leach

H.R. No. 2228

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, A remarkable life dedicated to inspiring students  
2 with a love of all creatures great and small has drawn to a close  
3 with the passing of Jim Dunlap of Dallas on April 5, 2015, at the age  
4 of 70; and

5           WHEREAS, Jim Dunlap was born in Waco on October 10, 1944, and  
6 he moved with his family to the Dallas area when he was two years  
7 old; his fascination with animals was evident from an early age when  
8 he used to bring them to share with his schoolmates on the  
9 playground, holding up a lizard to draw a crowd; by the time he was  
10 10, he had collected 52 box turtles; when his mother balked at  
11 letting all his critters in the house, his father built a shed for  
12 his collection in the backyard; and

13           WHEREAS, After graduating from Mesquite High School,  
14 Mr. Dunlap served in the U.S. Army for three years, and he worked as  
15 a police officer in University Park in order to put himself through  
16 North Texas State University, earning a bachelor's degree in  
17 education as well as a master's degree; and

18           WHEREAS, Mr. Dunlap began his career with the Lewisville  
19 Independent School District before joining the Plano ISD, where  
20 over the course of 34 years, he became a beloved biology teacher and  
21 mentor to generations of students, with whom he especially enjoyed  
22 sharing his enthusiasm for wild animals; and

23           WHEREAS, Known affectionately as "the snake man" or "the  
24 animal guy," Mr. Dunlap amassed such a large collection that the

1 school district gave him his own building at the Holifield Science  
2 Learning Center in 1989; known as the Living Materials Center, it  
3 became a haven for unwanted or abused animals, and through the years  
4 it offered thousands of delighted schoolchildren the chance to meet  
5 such diverse creatures as bobcats, monkeys, buzzards, and the star  
6 of Mr. Dunlap's menagerie, a giant Burmese python named Katy; and

7       WHEREAS, In addition to his work as a teacher, Mr. Dunlap  
8 authored seven books, often appeared on television to talk about  
9 animals, and wrote a column for the local paper called "Backyard  
10 Zoo"; he was recognized as the Humane Educator of the Year in 1993  
11 and 2008 by the Texas Animal Control Association, and when he  
12 retired from teaching in 2010, the center was rededicated as the Jim  
13 Dunlap Living Materials Center in his honor; even in retirement, he  
14 continued to volunteer at the center three days a week, as well as  
15 at the Dallas Zoo; and

16       WHEREAS, During summer vacations, when the schools were  
17 closed, Mr. Dunlap often brought animals home with him, and his  
18 wife, Peggy, who died in 2013, lovingly supported him in all his  
19 endeavors, allowing their home to be inhabited by monkeys, snakes,  
20 and all manner of creatures; Mr. Dunlap was further blessed with  
21 the love of his two children, Sid and Erin, and his two  
22 grandchildren, Stella and Sofia; and

23       WHEREAS, A gifted teacher, Jim Dunlap shared his joy in the  
24 magnificent diversity of the animal kingdom with generations of  
25 Texans, and the memory of his intellectual curiosity and spirit of  
26 adventure will continue to enrich the lives of all those who were  
27 privileged to know him; now, therefore, be it

1           RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 84th Texas  
2 Legislature pay tribute to the life of Jim Dunlap and extend sincere  
3 condolences to the members of his family: to his son, Scott Dunlap,  
4 and his wife, Lisa; to his daughter, Erin Dunlap Martinez, and her  
5 husband, Mike; to his sister, Paula Mischel; to his grandchildren,  
6 Stella and Sofia Martinez; to his niece, Tracy Barr; to his  
7 mother-in-law, Polly Wilds; and to his other relatives and friends;  
8 and, be it 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 Jim Dunlap.