

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 372

In Memory
of
Robert Landis Armstrong

WHEREAS, The Senate of the State of Texas joins Texans across the state in mourning the loss of Robert Landis Armstrong, who died March 1, 2015, at the age of 82; and

WHEREAS, Bob Armstrong served the citizens of Texas with distinction over the course of a decades-long career in public service, during which he played an essential role in dramatically increasing the revenues of the Permanent School Fund and the Permanent University Fund and in doubling the size of the state's park system; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Armstrong was born and raised in Austin; he earned a bachelor's degree and a law degree from The University of Texas, and from 1953 to 1955, he served the nation as an officer in the United States Navy; and

WHEREAS, He began his career by serving as a member of the Texas House of Representatives from 1963 to 1970; he was one of the first legislators in the state to focus on environmental issues and played a significant role in the creation of the Interagency Council on Natural Resources, the Texas Parks Advisory Committee, and the Texas Conservation Foundation; and

WHEREAS, During his tenure in the legislature, he also helped establish the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness, and he carried the constitutional amendment allowing for the investment of the Permanent University Fund in stocks, which enhanced the university's ability to invest wisely and increase its revenue; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Armstrong was elected land commissioner in 1970; as land commissioner, he managed the state's 22.5 million acres of public land and its mineral ownership, and he served in that capacity until 1982; under his leadership, the state put the management of public lands in an environmental context and continued to hold regular, successful lease sales despite the controversies that arose between environmentalists and oil and gas producers; and

WHEREAS, He continued to support and promote education during his tenure as land commissioner by raising the oil and gas royalties on state lands, which allowed the Permanent School Fund to more than triple its assets and the Permanent University Fund to experience dramatic growth; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Armstrong was appointed to the Parks and Wildlife Commission in 1985; while serving on the commission, he was able to help fulfill his longtime goal of purchasing land for the 212,000-acre Big Bend State Park, which doubled the size of

the state's park acreage; he went on to serve as natural resources and energy advisor to Governor Ann Richards and as assistant secretary for Land and Minerals Management in the United States Department of the Interior; and

WHEREAS, He received numerous honors over the course of his distinguished career, including the Texas Nature Conservancy's Lifetime Achievement Award, the *Field and Stream* Conservation Award, and the Chevron Conservation Award; he was the founder of the Austin Chapter of the Sierra Club and a founding board member of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation; and

WHEREAS, Bob Armstrong was a man of courage, determination, and vision who served the state and nation with distinction, and his leadership and countless accomplishments will not be forgotten; and

WHEREAS, He was devoted to his wife, Linda Aaker and to his four children and two grandchildren, and he leaves behind memories that will be treasured forever by all who were privileged to share in his life; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 84th Legislature, hereby extend sincere condolences to the bereaved family of Robert Landis Armstrong; and, be it further

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

Watson

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on March 16, 2015, by a rising vote.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate