

By: Hefner

H.R. No. 269

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, The State of Texas lost a celebrated entrepreneur  
2 with the passing of Lonnie "Bo" Pilgrim of Pittsburg on July 21,  
3 2017, at the age of 89; and

4           WHEREAS, Born in Pine on May 8, 1928, Bo Pilgrim was the son  
5 of Alonzo Monroe Pilgrim and Gertrude Gunn Pilgrim; his father died  
6 when he was a boy, and he went to live with his paternal  
7 grandmother; after working as a farmhand and performing other  
8 manual labor, he accepted an offer to partner with an older brother,  
9 Aubrey, in ownership of a feed store; and

10           WHEREAS, Mr. Pilgrim served his country in the United States  
11 Army, and while stationed in California, he was impressed by its  
12 enormous feed operations; on his return to Texas, he guided  
13 investment in larger facilities, and the Pilgrim family company  
14 expanded into chicken products and became a major egg producer; he  
15 took charge of Pilgrim's Pride following the death of his brother in  
16 1966, and while continuing to expand the business, he directed  
17 innovative efforts to make its products leaner and healthier; a  
18 savvy marketer, he gained national recognition by appearing in  
19 commercials, sporting a pilgrim's buckled hat; the company became  
20 one of the area's largest employers and one of the world's foremost  
21 poultry producers; he retired in 2010, having spent more than four  
22 decades building a company that today employs 35,000; and

23           WHEREAS, Highly engaged in the civic sphere, Mr. Pilgrim  
24 worked at the state level to promote a positive business

1 environment, and his dedication to East Texas was reflected in his  
2 founding of Pilgrim Bank, which he continued to serve as chair  
3 emeritus until his death; a man of deep faith, he was a congregant  
4 at First Baptist Church, where he taught Sunday school for many  
5 years, and he spread the gospel widely by handing out religious  
6 tracts; moreover, he established Marketplace Ministries, a  
7 workplace outreach, created Witness Park as a place of prayer and  
8 fellowship in the center of Pittsburg, and supported the completion  
9 of Pilgrim Plaza, a one-acre site for contemplation and community  
10 gatherings; his bountiful philanthropic giving made a positive  
11 difference in countless lives; and

12 WHEREAS, Mr. Pilgrim shared a fulfilling marriage of 61 years  
13 with his wife, Patty R. Pilgrim; he was the devoted father of three  
14 children, Ken, Pat, and Greta, and his family also included his  
15 grandchildren, Clayton, Jake, and Lonnie Pilgrim, Greta Gail  
16 Simpson, Chesley Hindman, and Shelby Owens, and his  
17 great-grandchildren, Kate, Emily, and Gracie Hindman; and

18 WHEREAS, Although his vision, work ethic, and business  
19 expertise brought him tremendous professional success, Bo Pilgrim  
20 placed the highest value on family, faith, and community, and those  
21 who were privileged to know him will continue to find inspiration in  
22 his example of generosity and humble appreciation for his  
23 blessings; now, therefore, be it

24 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 85th Texas  
25 Legislature, 1st Called Session, hereby pay tribute to the life of  
26 Bo Pilgrim and extend sincere condolences to his loved ones; and, be  
27 it further

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1           RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
2 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of  
3 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Lonnie "Bo"  
4 Pilgrim.