

By: Dutton

H.R. No. 517

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, A full and productive life drew to a close with the
2 passing of John Elihue Codwell Jr. on August 14, 2017; and

3 WHEREAS, The only child of educators Vera Codwell and John
4 Elihue Codwell Sr., John Codwell was born in the Fourth Ward in
5 Houston in 1933 and moved to the Fifth Ward when he was in
6 elementary school; he attended Phillis Wheatley High School and
7 graduated third in the Class of 1950, with both academic and
8 athletic honors; seeking opportunities not available in
9 segregation-era Texas, he chose to enroll in his father's alma
10 mater, the University of Michigan, where he earned three varsity
11 letters; he became the school's first African American basketball
12 player when he made the freshman team, and he went on to play at the
13 varsity level and made the All-Big Ten team as an honorable mention;
14 a member of the Reserve Officer Training Corps, he was commissioned
15 as a second lieutenant in the United States Air Force after
16 graduation; he served at Ellington Air Force Base as a navigator and
17 instructor and attained the rank of first lieutenant; and

18 WHEREAS, Mr. Codwell earned his master's degree from Wayne
19 State University, and he was employed by the Detroit school
20 district for 27 years; he rose to become superintendent of support
21 services with responsibility for managing the district's security
22 forces, student busing services, and lunch and food services
23 program; following his retirement from the district, he joined the
24 municipal government, and he was appointed executive director of

1 the Detroit Public Housing Authority; he was inducted into Sigma Pi
2 Phi, which honors accomplished African American college graduates
3 and professionals, and he belonged to Iota Boulé in Detroit and
4 later Nu Boulé in Houston; in 2013, he was inducted as a Phillis
5 Wheatley High School Alumni Wall of Fame honoree; and

6 WHEREAS, Devoted to his family, Mr. Codwell shared a
7 fulfilling marriage with Evelyn Bernette Reid Codwell that spanned
8 nearly three decades before her passing in 1985; he took great pride
9 in his two children, Carolyn Elaine Codwell and John Elihue Codwell
10 III, and his three grandchildren, Austin, Reid, and John; and

11 WHEREAS, While the death of John Codwell Jr. brings great
12 sadness to his family and friends, he leaves behind a legacy that
13 will long be treasured by all those who held him dear; now,
14 therefore, be it

15 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 85th Texas
16 Legislature, 1st Called Session, hereby pay tribute to the life of
17 John E. Codwell Jr. and extend sincere sympathy to his loved ones;
18 and, be it further

19 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
20 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of
21 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of John E.
22 Codwell Jr.