

By: Straus

H.R. No. 17

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, A life filled with heroic service and meaningful
2 accomplishments drew to a close with the passing of Joseph Ray Perry
3 of Paint Creek on April 27, 2017, at the age of 92; and

4 WHEREAS, The son of Hoyt Perry and Thelma Dinsmore Perry, Ray
5 Perry was born in the Paint Creek community on April 23, 1925; he
6 was educated at the Post School and in the Paint Creek Independent
7 School District, which his grandfather, Wayne Perry, helped
8 establish while Ray was growing up; with his country at war at the
9 time of his graduation in 1943, he joined the U.S. Army Air Corps,
10 and while still a teenager, he accepted the perilous assignment of
11 being the tail gunner on a B-17 bomber; he ultimately completed 35
12 combat missions over Nazi Germany, including one in which his
13 crew's heavily damaged plane barely made it back to its base in
14 England, and he was awarded a number of medals for his valorous
15 service; and

16 WHEREAS, After demobilization, Mr. Perry returned to Haskell
17 County and soon had the good fortune to meet Amelia June Holt on a
18 blind date; the couple married on June 29, 1947, beginning a
19 rewarding marriage that would span almost 70 years; they settled in
20 Paint Creek and worked as tenant farmers until they were able to
21 purchase their own property, and Mr. Perry's deep love of farming
22 and the land where he lived and worked were essential touchstones in
23 his life; and

24 WHEREAS, The Perrys became the parents of two children, Milla

1 Perry Jones and James Richard "Rick" Perry; Mr. Perry took great
2 pride in the accomplishments of his children, including his son,
3 who was inspired by his father's example to become an officer in the
4 U.S. Air Force and whose career in public office has included
5 service as the Texas commissioner of agriculture and lieutenant
6 governor, as the state's longest-serving governor, and as the
7 United States secretary of energy; and

8 WHEREAS, A prominent member of his community, Ray Perry
9 served for a decade on the Paint Creek ISD school board, and in
10 1968, he was first elected as a county commissioner; he held that
11 office for 28 years, and his achievements made a lasting and
12 positive difference in the lives of his fellow citizens; he also
13 distinguished himself during his six-year tenure on the West
14 Central Texas Council of Governments, which included two years as
15 the president of the board; moreover, he was a member and two-time
16 president of the Paint Creek Water Corporation board, after having
17 played an instrumental role in the corporation's founding; and

18 WHEREAS, In the 1990s, Mr. Perry retired, and he spent his
19 time enjoying the love and laughter of his grandchildren and his
20 great-grandchildren; through the years, he was an avid hunter, and
21 a highlight of his hunting excursions was a trip to Alaska on which
22 he shot a world record caribou; and

23 WHEREAS, Ray Perry was a courageous airman, a caring husband
24 and father, and a respected community leader, and the contributions
25 he made in each of these roles will long inspire those who were
26 fortunate enough to know him; now, therefore, be it

27 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 85th Texas

1 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life of Joseph Ray Perry and
2 extend sincere condolences to the members of his family: to his
3 wife, Amelia Perry; to his children, Milla Perry Jones and James
4 Richard "Rick" Perry and his wife, Anita; to his grandchildren,
5 Griffin Perry and his wife, Meredith, Caitlyn Jones, and Sydney
6 Perry Harrison and her husband, Brett; to his great-granddaughters,
7 Ella and Piper Perry; to his brothers, Gene Perry and Don Perry and
8 his wife, Nanette; to his sister, Frances Blacklock; to his nieces
9 and nephews; and to his other relatives and many friends; and, be it
10 further

11 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
12 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of
13 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Joseph Ray
14 Perry.