

By: Pickett

H.R. No. 190

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The Lone Star State lost an esteemed citizen with
2 the passing of Nelda McQuien Laney of Hale Center on August 24,
3 2016, at the age of 73; and

4 WHEREAS, The daughter of Helen and John McQuien, the former
5 Nelda McQuien was born in Garza County on June 7, 1943; she
6 graduated from Plainview High School and went on to complete her
7 bachelor's degree in education with honors at Texas Tech
8 University, where she met her future husband, James E. "Pete"
9 Laney; the couple became the parents of four children, James,
10 KaLyn, Jamey, and J. Pete, and later welcomed into their family six
11 grandchildren, Austin, Grant, Gavin, and Holden Phillips and
12 Clayton and Kendall Laney; and

13 WHEREAS, Mrs. Laney taught in Hale Center schools, and as her
14 husband pursued a career in public life, she became a splendid
15 campaigner; during his long tenure in the Texas House of
16 Representatives, including five terms as speaker, Mrs. Laney
17 provided invaluable assistance, and she led the effort to restore
18 the State Capitol and served as vice chair of the Texas Capitol
19 Restoration Celebration and as co-chair of the Capitol Fund Drive,
20 which raised private money for furnishings; in order to sustain
21 continuing preservation efforts and related educational programs,
22 she created a series of collectible Texas Capitol holiday
23 ornaments, which became enormously successful, generating more
24 than \$8 million to date; and

1 WHEREAS, In 2004, Mrs. Laney implemented a commemorative
2 ornament series for Keep Texas Beautiful, and for a dozen years, she
3 handled everything from the selection of themes to marketing and
4 public relations; she was the most successful salesperson for the
5 program and attended the organization's annual conferences each
6 summer in order to promote the project; along the way, she designed
7 ornaments for more than a dozen other entities across the state,
8 among them Texas Tech; and

9 WHEREAS, Mrs. Laney worked tirelessly in behalf of her alma
10 mater, serving as national president of the Texas Tech Alumni
11 Association and chairing the fund-raising committee for the \$4.5
12 million McKenzie-Merket Alumni Center expansion; in addition, she
13 served on the boards of the Texas Book Festival, the Friends of
14 Libraries and Archives of Texas, the National Center for Missing
15 and Exploited Children, and Greater Texas Community Partners, and
16 she was a member of Kappa Alpha Theta, the Omega Delphi Study Club,
17 the Caprock District Women's Club, and a host of other
18 organizations; and

19 WHEREAS, Widely admired for her vision and leadership,
20 Mrs. Laney won the affectionate nickname "the First Lady of West
21 Texas"; her work on the Capitol restoration earned a Star of Texas
22 Preservation Award and special recognition from the Texas Women's
23 Alliance; moreover, she was the recipient of the inaugural Woman of
24 Achievement Award from the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs, and
25 she was selected as Woman of the Year in both Plainview and Hale
26 Center; in 2007, she and her husband received the Texas Tech Alumni
27 Association's Lauro F. Cavazos Award, and two years later, she was

1 named a Distinguished Alumna of the Texas Tech College of
2 Education; she was also inducted into the Future Homemakers of
3 America Texas Hall of Fame and was named a Lifetime Member of the
4 Girl Scouts; and

5 WHEREAS, While pursuing her many civic endeavors, Mrs. Laney
6 made time for her cherished family and many friends, and she was a
7 surrogate mother and grandmother to countless people; her warmth,
8 kindness, grace, and good humor brightened the days of everyone
9 around her; and

10 WHEREAS, Nelda Laney demonstrated her great love for Texas
11 and its people in myriad ways, and although she is deeply missed by
12 all who were privileged to share in her love and friendship, her
13 enormous contributions will continue to resonate for years to come;
14 now, therefore, be it

15 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 85th Texas
16 Legislature hereby pay special tribute to the life of Nelda McQuien
17 Laney and extend profound condolences to her loved ones; and, be it
18 further

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