

By: Button

H.R. No. 405

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, A full and generous life drew to a close with the
2 death of Donald Benjamin Fielding of Dallas, who passed away on
3 January 20, 2017, at the age of 94; and

4 WHEREAS, Donald Fielding was born in Dallas on July 7, 1922;
5 he graduated from Forest Avenue High School as valedictorian at the
6 age of 15, and that same year he enrolled in the Wharton School at
7 the University of Pennsylvania, in pursuit of a career in the
8 foreign service; and

9 WHEREAS, After graduating from the Wharton School in 1942,
10 Mr. Fielding attended the University of Havana briefly before his
11 induction into the U.S. Army; he attended the Infantry Officer
12 Candidate School and went on to serve as an operations and training
13 staff officer until his discharge at the rank of second lieutenant
14 in 1946; and

15 WHEREAS, Following his return to Dallas, Mr. Fielding joined
16 the family business, National Shoes, where he worked for 42 years,
17 opening several additional locations in 1958, 1968, and 1977;
18 National Shoes was the oldest family-owned business in downtown
19 Dallas at the time, and, thanks to Mr. Fielding, the first downtown
20 retail establishment to hire an African American salesman; the
21 business also joined with a charity, Brother Bill's Helping Hand,
22 to provide shoes to needy children; and

23 WHEREAS, A powerful voice in Dallas politics from the 1960s
24 until the 1990s, Mr. Fielding took a particular interest in

1 education; he played a leading role in the establishment of the
2 Citizens' Committee for Better Schools and the League for
3 Educational Advancement in Dallas, which provided textbooks to poor
4 and underserved students in South and West Dallas, and he founded
5 Operation Employment, a Neighborhood Youth Corps project that
6 helped school dropouts obtain meaningful and productive work; and

7 WHEREAS, Mr. Fielding also helped found Citizens for
8 Representative Government, a group that was instrumental in pushing
9 for single-member districts; an active participant in the civil
10 rights movement, he marched for the integration of the Piccadilly
11 Cafeteria; he held several leadership positions in the Boy Scouts
12 of America, including chair of the High Trail Scout District, and he
13 started the first Hispanic Boy Scout troop in West Dallas;
14 moreover, he was the author of a book, *Assassination and Education:
15 A Guide to Dallas*; and

16 WHEREAS, Mr. Fielding married Virginia Lee Tipton in 1950,
17 and they shared a rewarding union that spanned 63 years, until her
18 death in 2013; the couple were the proud parents of four children,
19 Ronnie, Linda, B. Donald, and Paul, and they were blessed with many
20 grandchildren and great-grandchildren; and

21 WHEREAS, A devoted family man and an engaged citizen, Donald
22 Fielding lived a life rich with purpose, and he leaves behind a
23 record of service that his loved ones can remember with pride; now,
24 therefore, be it

25 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 85th Texas
26 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the memory of Donald Benjamin
27 Fielding and extend sincere condolences to his relatives and

1 friends; and, be it further

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