

By: Geren

H.R. No. 548

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The Lone Star State lost a respected attorney and
2 civic leader with the death of Dee J. Kelly of Fort Worth on October
3 2, 2015, at the age of 86; and

4 WHEREAS, Dee Kelly was born in Bonham on March 7, 1929; he
5 earned a degree at Texas Christian University, and while he was
6 studying law at George Washington University in Washington, D.C.,
7 he worked in the office of Sam Rayburn, the legendary speaker of the
8 U.S. House of Representatives; Mr. Kelly interrupted his studies to
9 serve in the U.S. Air Force from 1951 to 1953, rising to the rank of
10 first lieutenant; and

11 WHEREAS, Following his military service, Mr. Kelly resumed
12 his law studies and his work in Speaker Rayburn's office; he met
13 Janice LeBlanc, a student at Southern Seminary in Virginia, and the
14 couple were married in 1954; soon thereafter, he returned with his
15 bride to Texas, where he began his legal career at the Texas
16 Railroad Commission; over the next half century, he worked in
17 private practice, representing various influential clients in oil
18 and ranching, and as general counsel to companies such as Moncrief
19 Oil, Justin Industries, and Bass Brothers Enterprises; in 1979, he
20 was the founder of Kelly Hart & Hallman, the largest law firm in
21 Fort Worth; and

22 WHEREAS, For many years, Mr. Kelly was best known for his
23 civic and political engagement, both in Fort Worth and, at the state
24 level, as a friend and counselor for many politicians; he knew all

1 three presidents from Texas, Lyndon Johnson, George H. W. Bush, and
2 George W. Bush, as well as House Speaker Jim Wright and Senators
3 Lloyd Bentsen, John Tower, and John Cornyn, and he was especially
4 good friends with Governor John Connally; and

5 WHEREAS, Mr. Kelly served on the boards of AMR Corporation,
6 Sabre, Justin Industries, and North Texas Bancshares, and he was
7 likewise generous with his time as a board member for the Van
8 Cliburn Foundation, The University of Texas Law School Foundation,
9 the UT Southwestern Moncrief Cancer Center, Performing Arts Fort
10 Worth, and the Southwestern Exposition and Livestock Show; he
11 remained loyal to TCU, his Texas alma mater, for his entire life,
12 serving on the university's board for 32 years; and

13 WHEREAS, Among the numerous accolades Mr. Kelly received were
14 the Outstanding Citizen Award from the City of Fort Worth, the
15 Horatio Alger Award, the Blackstone Award from the Tarrant County
16 Bar Association, and the Citizen of the Year Award from the Longhorn
17 Council of the Boy Scouts of America; in 1999, he appeared on the
18 *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* list of the 10 most influential leaders in
19 Tarrant County in the second half of the 20th century, and both TCU
20 and George Washington University named buildings in his honor; and

21 WHEREAS, In all his endeavors, Mr. Kelly enjoyed the love and
22 support of a fine family, including his wife, Janice, with whom he
23 shared 61 years, as well as three children, Cynthia, Dee, and Craig,
24 and seven grandchildren, Ben, Kelly, Cate, Lynn, Camille, Patrick,
25 and Ryan; and

26 WHEREAS, Rising from humble beginnings in Bonham to become a
27 confidant and advisor to some of the most influential Texans in

1 recent history, Dee Kelly lived a rich and purposeful life, and he
2 leaves behind a legacy of achievement that will continue to
3 resonate for years to come; now, therefore, be it

4 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 85th Texas
5 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the memory of Dee J. Kelly and
6 extend sincere sympathy to all those who mourn his passing; and, be
7 it further

8 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
9 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of
10 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Dee Kelly.