

By: Giddings

H.R. No. 1163

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The city of Dallas lost a renowned civic leader with
2 the passing of Roy H. Williams on March 18, 2017, at the age of 74;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, A native of Longview, Roy Williams became involved
5 in the civil rights movement at an early age; as a teenager, he
6 protested segregated lunch counters and bus stations in East Texas,
7 and in 1959, he was named president of the Longview NAACP Youth
8 Council; and

9 WHEREAS, After graduating from high school, he attended
10 Northeastern Junior College in Sterling, Colorado, and he went on
11 to join the U.S. Army and serve his country in Germany; following
12 his return to civilian life, he moved to New York and then to
13 Dallas, where he began working with other activists to address
14 crucial issues facing local minority groups; he guided the Police
15 and Paramedic Complaints Committee as its treasurer and vice chair,
16 and he took a stand against apartheid by helping to sever the city's
17 ties with South Africa; he also gave back to the community as the
18 founder of Rainbow Bridge, a nonprofit youth organization; and

19 WHEREAS, Although his long career in civil rights advocacy
20 was filled with many accomplishments, Mr. Williams is perhaps best
21 known for his role in rectifying the lack of minority
22 representation on the Dallas City Council; he and fellow activist
23 Marvin Crenshaw were plaintiffs in a landmark 1988 federal lawsuit
24 that eventually led to the establishment of the city's 14-1 plan,

1 under which council members are chosen in district rather than
2 citywide elections; the new boundaries went into effect for the
3 November 1991 election, resulting in a marked increase in the
4 number of minority candidates voted into office; and

5 WHEREAS, An inspiration to all who knew him, Roy Williams
6 devoted his life to advancing the mission of the civil rights
7 movement, and his contributions to the cause of social justice will
8 long resonate in Dallas, the Lone Star State, and beyond; now,
9 therefore, be it

10 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 85th Texas
11 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life of Roy H. Williams and
12 extend sincere sympathy to all those who mourn his passing; and, be
13 it further

14 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
15 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of
16 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Roy
17 Williams.