

By: Lambert

H.R. No. 1849

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, A life of professional achievement and dedicated
2 public service drew to a close with the passing of former state
3 representative Gary Thompson on April 13, 2017, at the age of 80;
4 and

5 WHEREAS, A native of Vernon, Gary Thompson was born on June
6 15, 1936, to Virgil and Floy Thompson; he graduated from Tyler High
7 School in 1954 and went on to earn a bachelor's degree at Abilene
8 Christian University in 1960; he subsequently completed a master's
9 degree at the University of Arkansas and a Ph.D. at North Texas
10 State University; and

11 WHEREAS, After holding teaching and coaching positions in New
12 Mexico and Arizona, Dr. Thompson moved to Abilene in 1967 and
13 embarked on a career at ACU that spanned more than four decades;
14 over the course of his distinguished tenure at the university, he
15 served as a professor of political science and department chair, as
16 well as chair of the Faculty Senate and director of the American
17 Enterprise Forum and the Taft Institute for Teachers; from 1986 to
18 1995, he took a break from the classroom to work as director of
19 governmental relations for the Teacher Retirement System of Texas,
20 after which he returned to his alma mater, where he remained until
21 his retirement in 2011; and

22 WHEREAS, In 1978, Dr. Thompson was elected to the first of
23 four consecutive terms in the Texas House of Representatives;
24 during his years in the legislature, he held membership on the Ways

1 and Means Committee, the Sunset Advisory Commission, the State
2 Affairs Committee, and the County Affairs Committee, which he
3 chaired; and

4 WHEREAS, This esteemed Texan also devoted his time and
5 talents to advancing a host of worthy causes within his community;
6 he was a member of Kiwanis International and a board and committee
7 member for such organizations as the National Multiple Sclerosis
8 Society, the West Central Texas Council of Governments, Meals on
9 Wheels, and the Boys & Girls Club of Abilene, as well as the
10 Leadership Abilene program of the Abilene Chamber of Commerce; a
11 man of abiding faith, he was a longtime congregant at University
12 Church of Christ in Abilene, where he served as a deacon and
13 volunteered with the prison ministry; and

14 WHEREAS, Gary Thompson and his wife, Nancy, met as students
15 at ACU and married in 1958; the couple became the proud parents of
16 two children, Tom and Jane, and shared a devoted union of 56 years,
17 before Mrs. Thompson's passing in 2014; and

18 WHEREAS, A beloved educator and admired civic leader and
19 public servant, Dr. Gary Thompson left an indelible mark on
20 countless lives, and those who were blessed to share in his love and
21 affection will forever carry him close in their hearts; now,
22 therefore, be it

23 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 85th Texas
24 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the memory of the Honorable Gary
25 Thompson and extend sincere sympathy to the members of his family:
26 to his son, Dr. Tom Thompson, and his wife, Beth; to his daughter,
27 Jane Koble, and her husband, Chuck; to his grandchildren, Ameer,

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1 Sarah, Emily, Ava, Alex, and Tate, and his step-grandchildren, Beau
2 and Austin; and to all who mourn his passing; and, be it further

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