

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 696

WHEREAS, May 2, 2017, marks the 40th anniversary of the longest filibuster in history, which took place on the floor of the Texas Senate; and

WHEREAS, The filibuster is a time-honored tradition dating to ancient Rome that allows a legislator to seek to halt or delay the passage of legislation by prolonged discussion; the Texas Senate requires that a senator remain standing at his or her desk during the duration of a filibuster, that no breaks be taken, and that the entirety of the discussion be directly related to the bill under consideration; and

WHEREAS, Senator Bill Meier, who represented Tarrant County, took the floor of the Senate at 3:20 p.m. on May 2, 1977, and did not relinquish it until 10:20 a.m. on May 4; for 43 hours, he spoke in opposition to a Senate bill that addressed the state's Open Records Act as it related to worker's compensation issues; and

WHEREAS, He relied on many of the tried-and-true tools of the filibusterer's art, including comfortable shoes, hard candies, lemon slices, water, and the use of a device, better left unexplained, called an astronaut bag; and

WHEREAS, Despite his stamina, his eloquence, and the riveting excitement inherent in reading aloud hundreds of legal cases, he was unable to convince his fellow senators of the righteousness of his cause, and the bill passed by a vote of 23-7; and

WHEREAS, His 43-hour marathon continues to be the longest filibuster by an American politician in a state legislature or in

Congress; it was recognized by the *Guinness Book of World Records*, which no longer lists filibusters in its records, most likely because of the improbability of this record ever being eclipsed; and

WHEREAS, Today, Bill Meier serves with distinction as the Place 2 Justice on the Second Court of Appeals in North Texas; his record-setting filibuster is an integral part of the storied history of the Texas Senate, and it is truly fitting that this extraordinary feat be celebrated; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 85th Legislature, hereby commemorate the 40th anniversary of the longest filibuster in history and recognize, but do not yield the floor to, Justice Bill Meier for his role in this historic event; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be prepared for Justice Meier in honor of this momentous anniversary.

Hancock

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on May 2, 2017.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate