

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 750

In Memory
of
Lyda Ann Thomas

WHEREAS, The Senate of the State of Texas joins the citizens of Galveston in mourning the loss of Lyda Ann Thomas, who died April 19, 2017, at the age of 80; and

WHEREAS, Lyda Ann Thomas was born November 20, 1936, into one of Galveston's founding families and civic dynasties; her grandfather, I. H. Kempner, played an important role in helping the city recover after the devastating 1900 hurricane and was instrumental in acquiring the financing needed to build the seawall and raise the city; and

WHEREAS, She attended the prestigious Hockaday School in Dallas before going to New York City, where she attended Columbia University and worked at a number of jobs, including as an editorial assistant at *Harper's Bazaar* magazine; she married Jerry Redmond Thomas in 1958, and the couple raised their four children in New York City; and

WHEREAS, She returned to Galveston in 1973 and opened Thomas and Company, which bought and restored historic buildings and played an important early role in the island's historic renovation movement; she later opened The Bridge, a halfway house for young adults with emotional disturbances, before establishing Galveston Harbor Tours; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Thomas served on the Galveston City Council for six years before being elected mayor in 2004 with more than 60 percent of the vote; she served three consecutive terms and became known as the "Hurricane Mayor" for her exceptional leadership and her composed demeanor during the threat of Hurricane Rita and the devastation of Hurricane Ike; afterwards, she worked to institute policies to better prepare the city to face future disasters, and she traveled the country to share the lessons she had learned; and

WHEREAS, She received numerous honors and accolades through the years, including the Galveston Historical Foundation's Steel Oleander Award and the Spirit of Elissa Award, and she was named the 2006 Citizen of the Year by the *Galveston County Daily News*; she served as president of the Harris and Eliza Kempner Fund, which provides funding for the arts, community development, and environmental projects in the Galveston area; and

WHEREAS, A woman of courage, strength, and compassion, she gave generously to others, and her wisdom, her commitment to public service, and her enthusiasm for living each day to the fullest will not be forgotten; and

WHEREAS, She was devoted to her children, and she leaves behind memories that will be treasured forever by her family and countless friends; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 85th Legislature, hereby extend sincere condolences to the bereaved family of Lyda Ann Thomas; and, be it further

S.R. No. 750

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be prepared for her family as an expression of deepest sympathy from the Texas Senate and that when the Senate adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Lyda Ann Thomas.

Taylor of Galveston

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on May 9, 2017, by a rising vote.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate