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By:  Anchia H.R. No. 70

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, Herbert David Kelleher, cofounder of Southwest Airlines and a legendary figure in the American aviation industry, passed away on January 3, 2019, at the age of 87; and

WHEREAS, The son of Harry and Ruth Kelleher and the youngest of four children, Herb Kelleher was born in Camden, New Jersey, on March 12, 1931; he attended Wesleyan University and New York University, where he obtained his law degree, and then moved to Texas in 1962; in 1967, he joined forces with his friend and client Rollin King to incorporate the company that would become Southwest Airlines, which he served as general counsel, then as chairman, before taking the reins as president and CEO in 1981; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Kelleher was a pioneer in adopting practices never before seen in the industry, which established Southwest Airlines as a titan among U.S. carriers and inspired a wave of imitators of its affordable, no-frills model of air travel; his business savvy and creativity helped Southwest remain profitable for 45 straight years even as rival carriers staggered, and he oversaw its expansion beyond the Texas triangle of Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio to destinations throughout the country and beyond; and

WHEREAS, Famous for his energy and humor, Mr. Kelleher embraced his role as the face of Southwest, even starring in television commercials and other promotions; he felt strongly that business success hinges on the happiness of workers, and he took care to provide his workforce with personal attention and freedom to express their individuality, while also supporting them with such benefits as the industry's first employee profit-sharing program; celebrated for its employee- and customer-centric corporate culture, Southwest continues to top lists of the best employers in the nation; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Kelleher retired as president and CEO in 2001 and as chairman in 2008, but remained active in the company and retained his office at Southwest's Love Field headquarters in Dallas; he also served his community in various roles, including as chairman of the board of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas from 2011 to 2014; and

WHEREAS, For more than 60 years, Mr. Kelleher shared his life with his wife, Joan Kelleher; he was the proud father of four children, Julie, Michael, Ruth, and David, and he was also cherished by numerous grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, The legacy of Herb Kelleher looms large in the world of air travel, where he demonstrated the vast potential for success of a company based around shrewd business sense, nonconformity, and respect and dignity for workers at all levels, and he will be remembered with deep and lasting admiration by all who were fortunate enough to call him a friend; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 86th Texas Legislature hereby pay tribute to the memory of Herbert David Kelleher and extend heartfelt sympathy to his loved ones and those who join them in mourning his passing; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Herbert David Kelleher.