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By:  Kacal H.R. No. 700

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, The life of an admired lawmaker and philanthropist drew to a close with the passing of former state representative and state senator Murray Watson Jr. of Mart on July 24, 2018, at the age of 86; and

WHEREAS, Born in Mart on May 14, 1932, Murray Watson was the son of Murray Watson Sr. and Ethel Bryson Watson; he worked at the family feed store as a boy and completed his bachelor's and law degrees at Baylor University; when he was only 24, he won election to the Texas House of Representatives, and following three terms, he was elected to the Texas Senate from District 13, which included McLennan, Bell, Milam, Falls, and Limestone Counties; he became Senate president pro tempore in the 61st Legislature, and over the course of a decade in office, he served as chair of several committees, including Environment, Insurance, Preschool Education Standards, Legislative, Congressional, and Judicial Districts, and State Departments and Institutions; among the many important pieces of legislation that he carried, he took greatest pride in the bill that enabled the establishment of Texas State Technical College; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Watson returned to practicing law in 1973, and for 26 years, he was general counsel for the Texas State College system; following his retirement, he remained a staunch supporter of the institution, which named its student recreation center in his honor; he was instrumental in the establishment of two nonprofits that helped students secure loans, the Brazos Higher Education Authority and Brazos Higher Education Service Authority, and he was CEO of both; moreover, he was a trustee of the McLennan Community College Foundation and a tremendous benefactor of his alma mater; although he tried to keep his generosity quiet, in 2017, he was named Baylor Lawyer of the Year; he was a member of the Baylor Law Alumni Association, the Baylor Bear Foundation, and the Baylor Founders Club; and

WHEREAS, Even while serving in the legislature, Mr. Watson continued to help out at Watson Feed Store on Saturdays to stay in touch with his fellow citizens; he also owned and ran the family ranch and cattle operation; a valued member of the business community, he was a Paul Harris Fellow in the Rotary Club of Waco, and he was active in Masonry for more than six decades; he belonged to Austin Avenue United Methodist Church; and

WHEREAS, Above all, Mr. Watson was devoted to his family; he shared a rewarding marriage of nearly 59 years with his wife, Greta Warren Watson, and he was the proud father of Marcus and Milicent and grandfather of Annika and Niklas; and

WHEREAS, Murray Watson made a positive difference in the lives of countless Texans through his passion for helping others and his commitment to higher education, and he will be remembered with deep admiration and affection by all who were fortunate enough to know him; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 86th Texas Legislature hereby pay tribute to the memory of the Honorable Murray Watson Jr. and extend sincere sympathy to his loved ones; 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 Murray Watson Jr.