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By:  Holland H.R. No. 803

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, The Honorable Ralph Moody Hall of Rockwall, one of the last members of the Greatest Generation to serve in the U.S. Congress, passed away on March 7, 2019, at the age of 95, bringing a great loss to his family, friends, and fellow Texans; and

WHEREAS, First elected to the House of Representatives in 1980, Ralph Hall became legendary for his work ethic and dedication to constituent service; he spent every weekend back home when Congress was in session, visiting small towns and learning about voters' concerns; on one occasion, he even drove a local veteran some 300 miles round-trip to get his benefits set up at the regional VA office in Waco; and

WHEREAS, Congressman Hall was ever attentive to the economic interests of Texas; as ranking member and chair of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, he championed NASA, and he advocated for the state's oil and gas industry as a key member of the Energy and Commerce Committee; moreover, he secured federal funding for a number of major projects, including an airport and roadway, now named in his honor; his integrity, charm, and self-deprecating sense of humor won over even those who disagreed with him on nearly every issue, and he was reelected 16 times, becoming the oldest person ever to serve in the U.S. House in 2012; he was 91 when he left office in 2015; and

WHEREAS, Born in Fate on May 3, 1923, Congressman Hall delivered newspapers and worked at a pharmacy while growing up; he also entered politics at an early age, handing out campaign cards for candidates and chauffeuring them around; he joined the U.S. Navy during World War II, and completed pilot training; after demobilization, he went to college on the G.I. Bill and then worked three jobs while pursuing a law degree at Southern Methodist University; he won election as Rockwall County Judge and finished his degree near the beginning of his 12-year tenure in that office; and

WHEREAS, Congressman Hall went on to win a state senate seat in 1962, and over the next decade, he chaired a number of committees, among them Consumer Protection, Transportation, and County, District, and Urban Affairs; during a short stint in the private sector, he practiced law, served as chief executive of Texas Aluminum Corporation, and founded a bank in his hometown; and

WHEREAS, Devoted to his family, he shared a rewarding relationship with Mary Ellen Murphy Hall before her passing in 2008, and he once told a reporter, with wry wistfulness, "In 63 years of marriage, we never had a single, solitary argument . . . that I won"; he was the father of three sons, Hampton, Brett, and Blakeley, and he took great pride in his five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren; long after his 80th birthday, he remained fit and active, starting his days with two-mile runs and, in 2012, marking Memorial Day by skydiving to honor members of the military; and

WHEREAS, Ralph Hall dedicated every chapter of his life to public service, leaving a legacy that will continue to resonate for years to come, and he will be remembered with admiration and deep affection by all who were privileged to know this kind, thoughtful, and gracious man; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 86th Texas Legislature hereby pay tribute to the memory of former U.S. Congressman Ralph Moody Hall and extend sincere condolences to all who mourn 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 Ralph Moody Hall.