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By:  Collier H.R. No. 985

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, A rich and purposeful life drew to a close with the passing of former Tuskegee Airman and longtime educator Robert T. McDaniel of Fort Worth on March 19, 2019, at the age of 96; and

WHEREAS, Robert Tennerson McDaniel was born in Mertens on February 28, 1923, to Alfred and Molly McDaniel, and he grew up with two sisters, Gladys and Carrie; following his graduation as valedictorian and president of the Class of 1940 at I. M. Terrell High School in Fort Worth, he enrolled at Prairie View State Normal and Industrial College on a scholarship; and

WHEREAS, During World War II, Mr. McDaniel was drafted into the U.S. Army Air Forces in 1943 and trained as a bombardier and pilot in Alabama as one of the famed Tuskegee Airmen; he rose to the rank of second lieutenant, and while stationed at Freeman Field in Indiana, he was one of the black officers who protested racial inequity by repeatedly attempting to enter a segregated officers' club; threatened with court martial, the men were later exonerated, and their courageous actions helped lead to the integration of the military; and

WHEREAS, After concluding his service in the armed forces, Mr. McDaniel returned to the Prairie View A&M campus, where he earned bachelor's and master's degrees, and he also held a counselor's certification from the University of Colorado Boulder; in the course of his tenure with the Fort Worth Independent School District, he worked as a mathematics teacher, counselor, and volunteer coach and served as vice principal at Dunbar Junior-Senior High School and as principal at James E. Guinn and Morningside Middle Schools; in 2009, he was inducted into the district's Wall of Fame; and

WHEREAS, Mr. McDaniel shared a rewarding marriage with Hester Randle McDaniel that spanned 55 years before she passed away, and he was the proud father of a son, Robert Mennefee; later in life, he was blessed with three grandchildren, Keisha, Ashlee, and Robert, five great-grandchildren, Taylor, Dennis, Morgan, Jordan, and Jerrod, and a great-great-grandson, Steven; a man of strong religious faith, he was a member of St. Peter Presbyterian Church; and

WHEREAS, One of the last surviving Tuskegee Airmen, Mr. McDaniel received an honorary doctorate from Tuskegee University in 2006, and the following year, he and his fellow airmen received the Congressional Gold Medal of Freedom from President George W. Bush; in January 2009, he was invited to attend the inauguration of President Barack Obama; and

WHEREAS, A pioneer who helped break down racial barriers in the armed forces, Robert McDaniel also distinguished himself as an influential teacher and administrator, and his life and achievements will forever remain a source of inspiration to all who knew and loved him; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 86th Texas Legislature hereby pay tribute to the memory of Robert T. McDaniel and extend heartfelt sympathy to his family and friends; 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 Robert T. McDaniel.