H.R. No. 1302

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, The life of a legislative titan drew to a close with the passing of former state senator A. R. "Babe" Schwartz of Galveston on August 10, 2018, at the age of 92; and

WHEREAS, Born on the island in 1926, Babe Schwartz began his long career in public service while still a student at The University of Texas School of Law; he worked for both the Texas Legislative Council and the chief clerk of the Texas House, and after graduating, he served as a prosecutor in the Galveston County attorney's office; in 1954, he won the first of two terms in the Texas House, and he went on to serve in the Texas Senate for 21 years; and

WHEREAS, Senator Schwartz was a staunch champion of Galveston Island, and he fiercely defended its natural beauty and the public's right to enjoy it; his monumental accomplishments included legislation that serves as a foundation for much of the Texas Coastal Management Plan; he was instrumental in the creation of the 1959 Open Beaches Act, and he later sponsored a constitutional amendment that gave counties the right to regulate traffic on beaches; in addition, he secured passage of measures to ban littering on beaches and protect wetlands and freshwater inflows into bays and estuaries; he was also responsible for legislation that created the Park Board of Trustees, which oversees Galveston beaches; and

WHEREAS, Known for his rapier wit and bold oratory, as well as tactical expertise, Senator Schwartz played a key role in bringing Galveston The University of Texas Medical Branch, as well as grade raisings for the causeway and other infrastructure improvements; moreover, he fought tirelessly for civil rights, open government, education, and services for those with mental challenges; he was a member of the "Killer Bees," who absented themselves from the upper chamber in a successful protest against controversial legislation during the 66th Legislative Session; and

WHEREAS, Senator Schwartz served on every major committee and held numerous leadership roles, chairing Natural Resources, Coastal Lands and Water, Beach Study, Jurisprudence, Rules of the Senate, and Military and Veterans Affairs; he further served as chair of the Texas Coastal and Marine Council, the national Coastal States Organization, and the Rights and Suffrage Committee of the 1974 Constitutional Convention; and

WHEREAS, After leaving public office, Senator Schwartz continued his advocacy in the legislative sphere; innumerable colleagues sought the benefit of his acumen and vast knowledge, as well as the scintillation of his vivid stories and unvarnished opinions; he helped create the Sea Grant Program at Texas A&M University and contributed to the formation of the institution's Galveston campus; he taught students at the University of Houston Law Center, the UT Law School, and the Texas A&M campuses at Galveston and Corpus Christi; in 2016, the City of Galveston recognized his impact by naming "Babe's Beach" in his honor, and his myriad accolades further included the inaugural Bob Eckhardt Lifetime Coastal Achievement Award and the 1987 Distinguished Service Award from the National Hurricane Conference, acknowledging him as the first legislator in the nation to recognize the need for hurricane preparedness; and

WHEREAS, The son of Joseph and Clara Schwartz, Senator Schwartz grew up with four siblings, Louis, Ron, Steven, and Phyllis; as a boy, he worked on the shore, renting beach gear and serving as a lifeguard; he interrupted his education at Texas A&M University to enlist in the U.S. Navy during World War II and served in the Pacific theater; after moving to Austin for law school, he met his future wife, the former Marilyn Ruth Cohn, and they married in 1951; their family grew to include 4 sons, Bob, Dick, John, and Tom, as well as 12 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Babe Schwartz worked tirelessly to improve the lives of his fellow Texans and safeguard our state's priceless coastal heritage, and although he is greatly missed by all who were privileged to know him, his vision and leadership will continue to resonate in the years to come; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 86th Texas Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life of the Honorable A. R. "Babe" Schwartz and extend deep sympathy 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 former state senator A. R. "Babe" Schwartz.

Hunter

Bonnen of Galveston

Middleton

Bonnen of Brazoria

Thompson of Harris

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Speaker of the House

I certify that H.R. No. 1302 was unanimously adopted by a rising vote of the House on May 3, 2019.

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Chief Clerk of the House