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By:  Landgraf H.R. No. 1533

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, The passing of Raymon Charles Stoker Jr. of Odessa on August 31, 2018, at the age of 79, concluded a remarkable life of service to the state and to his community; and

WHEREAS, The son of Raymon Charles Stoker Sr. and Claudene Stoker, Ray Stoker was born in Odessa on February 19, 1939, and grew up with a sister, Betty; he completed both his bachelor's degree and his law degree at Baylor University, where he was captain of the golf team, president of the Letterman's Club, and a member of the Baylor Law Review editorial board; on August 24, 1963, he married the former Carole Fannin, and they became the parents of Raymon, Carole, Craig, and Cathleen; he was later blessed with a grandson, Connor; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Stoker began his career as a briefing attorney for the chief justice of the Texas Supreme Court; returning to Odessa, he joined the Shafer Law Firm, where he would practice for 53 years, focusing on insurance defense litigation; he was a member of many professional associations and served as president of the Ector County Bar Association and as a member of the board of Baylor Law School; and

WHEREAS, In 1985, Mr. Stoker was appointed by Governor Mark White to the Texas State Highway and Public Transportation Commission, and after helping to guide it through a positive sunset review, he was named chair of the newly formed Texas Department of Transportation by Governor Ann Richards; he also served on the boards of the Texas Turnpike Authority and the Texas High-Speed Rail Authority; committed to improving infrastructure, he was instrumental in the development of the Texas Highway Trunk System, composed of 10,500 miles of rural highways; following his retirement from TxDOT in 1993, he served for 10 years as chair of the Texas Good Roads Transportation Association; he further served as the attorney for the Colorado River Municipal Water District; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Stoker gave generously of his time and talents to many state and local organizations, among them the Texas Council on Economic Education, The University of Texas Permian Basin Development Board, and the Texas Water Development Board; in addition, he served on the boards of High Sky Children's Ranch, the Permian Basin Area Foundation, the Permian Basin Petroleum Museum, and the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum; and

WHEREAS, In the 1990s, both Ray Stoker Jr. Highway and a ferry between Galveston and the Bolivar Peninsula were named in his honor, and he was later inducted into the Transportation Hall of Honor; among myriad other accolades, he received the Heritage of Odessa Award and the Coleman County Chamber of Commerce, Agriculture and Tourist Bureau Award, and he was named Odessa Citizen of the Year for 1991; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Stoker was sustained through life's challenges by his strong faith; a man of great warmth, generosity, good humor, and fine character, he had a wide circle of longtime friends from his work, his civic endeavors, and his favorite leisure pursuits, hunting, fishing, golfing, and traveling; he is remembered with deep affection by all who were privileged to know him, and his outstanding contributions to his state and his community will continue to benefit his fellow citizens 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 Ray Stoker 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 Raymon Charles Stoker Jr.