

By: Anchia

H.R. No. 70

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Herbert David Kelleher, cofounder of Southwest  
2 Airlines and a legendary figure in the American aviation industry,  
3 passed away on January 3, 2019, at the age of 87; and

4 WHEREAS, The son of Harry and Ruth Kelleher and the youngest  
5 of four children, Herb Kelleher was born in Camden, New Jersey, on  
6 March 12, 1931; he attended Wesleyan University and New York  
7 University, where he obtained his law degree, and then moved to  
8 Texas in 1962; in 1967, he joined forces with his friend and client  
9 Rollin King to incorporate the company that would become Southwest  
10 Airlines, which he served as general counsel, then as chairman,  
11 before taking the reins as president and CEO in 1981; and

12 WHEREAS, Mr. Kelleher was a pioneer in adopting practices  
13 never before seen in the industry, which established Southwest  
14 Airlines as a titan among U.S. carriers and inspired a wave of  
15 imitators of its affordable, no-frills model of air travel; his  
16 business savvy and creativity helped Southwest remain profitable  
17 for 45 straight years even as rival carriers staggered, and he  
18 oversaw its expansion beyond the Texas triangle of Dallas, Houston,  
19 and San Antonio to destinations throughout the country and beyond;  
20 and

21 WHEREAS, Famous for his energy and humor, Mr. Kelleher  
22 embraced his role as the face of Southwest, even starring in  
23 television commercials and other promotions; he felt strongly that  
24 business success hinges on the happiness of workers, and he took

1 care to provide his workforce with personal attention and freedom  
2 to express their individuality, while also supporting them with  
3 such benefits as the industry's first employee profit-sharing  
4 program; celebrated for its employee- and customer-centric  
5 corporate culture, Southwest continues to top lists of the best  
6 employers in the nation; and

7 WHEREAS, Mr. Kelleher retired as president and CEO in 2001  
8 and as chairman in 2008, but remained active in the company and  
9 retained his office at Southwest's Love Field headquarters in  
10 Dallas; he also served his community in various roles, including as  
11 chairman of the board of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas from  
12 2011 to 2014; and

13 WHEREAS, For more than 60 years, Mr. Kelleher shared his life  
14 with his wife, Joan Kelleher; he was the proud father of four  
15 children, Julie, Michael, Ruth, and David, and he was also  
16 cherished by numerous grandchildren; and

17 WHEREAS, The legacy of Herb Kelleher looms large in the world  
18 of air travel, where he demonstrated the vast potential for success  
19 of a company based around shrewd business sense, nonconformity, and  
20 respect and dignity for workers at all levels, and he will be  
21 remembered with deep and lasting admiration by all who were  
22 fortunate enough to call him a friend; now, therefore, be it

23 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 86th Texas  
24 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the memory of Herbert David  
25 Kelleher and extend heartfelt sympathy to his loved ones and those  
26 who join them in mourning his passing; and, be it further

27 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be

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1 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of  
2 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Herbert  
3 David Kelleher.