

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, A full and inspiring life drew to a close with the  
2 death of beloved Austin supercentenarian Richard A. Overton on  
3 December 27, 2018, at the age of 112; and

4           WHEREAS, The grandson of slaves, Richard Overton was born to  
5 Gentry Overton Sr. and Elizabeth "Lizzie" Franklin in St. Mary's  
6 Colony in Bastrop County on May 11, 1906; he grew up with three  
7 brothers, Hilliard, Irwin, and Gentry, and six sisters, Annie,  
8 Lola, Dora, Lillie Mae, Tenola, and Geneva; a hard worker, he held  
9 numerous jobs in his youth, from landscaper and homebuilder to  
10 furniture store employee; after enlisting in the U.S. Army in 1942,  
11 he was deployed to the Pacific theater; his all-African American  
12 battalion, the 1887th Engineer Aviation Battalion, helped free the  
13 island of Angaur from Japanese forces; he was recognized for his  
14 expert marksmanship and attained the rank of corporal; and

15           WHEREAS, Mr. Overton returned to Austin in 1945 and built a  
16 house on Hamilton Avenue, where he resided for the rest of his life;  
17 he went back to work in the furniture business, and for many years  
18 he was employed by the Texas Treasury Department; while Ann  
19 Richards led the agency, the gregarious veteran formed a friendship  
20 with the future governor, and he liked driving huge deposits to the  
21 bank in a golf cart; he kept busy selling fruit and mowing lawns as  
22 well; and

23           WHEREAS, Following his retirement, Mr. Overton became a  
24 local legend, watching over his neighbors and greeting them from

1 his front porch; his circle of admirers continued to widen, and in  
2 2013, he was lauded by President Barack Obama at a Veterans Day  
3 ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery; that same year, the Austin  
4 City Council proclaimed his birthday Richard A. Overton Day, and in  
5 2017 the city conferred the honorary name Richard Overton Avenue on  
6 his block; when Governor Greg Abbott presented the Overton family  
7 with a Texas flag in Mr. Overton's honor, he shared stories of how  
8 the centenarian had challenged him to a wheelchair race; in his  
9 later years, Mr. Overton continued to enjoy attending Shoreline  
10 Church, caring for his cats, and indulging in whiskey, coffee, ice  
11 cream, and cigars, and he happily welcomed visitors from near and  
12 far to his front-yard birthday parties; and

13 WHEREAS, Richard Overton gained international fame as the  
14 oldest living U.S. veteran, but it was his charm, wit, kindness, and  
15 optimism that won the hearts of his fellow Texans, and he will be  
16 remembered with great admiration and affection by all who were  
17 fortunate enough to know him; now, therefore, be it

18 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 86th Texas  
19 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life of Richard A. Overton and  
20 extend sincere condolences to all who mourn his passing; and, be it  
21 further

22 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
23 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of  
24 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Richard A.  
25 Overton.

Cole

H.R. No. 133

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Speaker of the House

I certify that H.R. No. 133 was unanimously adopted by a rising vote of the House on March 6, 2019.

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Chief Clerk of the House