

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, A life of extraordinary achievement drew to a close
2 with the passing of the Honorable John F. "Jack" Onion Jr. of Austin
3 on September 2, 2018, at the age of 93; and

4 WHEREAS, Born on March 27, 1925, in San Antonio, Jack Onion
5 was the son of Judge John F. Onion and Harriet Onion and the
6 grandson of former state representative John Frank Onion; after
7 graduating from Thomas Jefferson High School, he enlisted along
8 with his twin brother, James, in the United States Marine Corps,
9 where he served our country during the invasion of Okinawa and the
10 occupation of Japan at the end of World War II; upon returning home
11 from the war, he pursued his childhood dream to become an attorney
12 by graduating from Trinity University and The University of Texas
13 School of Law; and

14 WHEREAS, A dedicated public servant, Judge Onion joined the
15 Bexar County District Attorney's Office and went on to become chief
16 of its civil division; in 1954, at the age of 29, he was elected a
17 justice of the peace in Bexar County, where he brought to Texas its
18 first ever medical examiner's office; continuing his success in the
19 Texas judiciary, he won his campaign to preside over Bexar County
20 Criminal District Court No. 2, making him the youngest elected
21 district judge in the state at the time; and

22 WHEREAS, In 1966, Judge Onion was elevated to a seat on the
23 Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, the state's highest criminal
24 court; he subsequently became the first elected presiding judge of

1 the court, after that position was made an elective office through
2 passage of a constitutional amendment, and he would go on to serve
3 in that capacity for 18 years; during his tenure, he authored around
4 1,500 signed and published majority opinions; following his
5 retirement, he continued to share his legal expertise for many
6 years as a visiting judge in trial and appellate courts; and

7 WHEREAS, In all his endeavors, Judge Onion enjoyed the love
8 and support of his wife, Nancy Lee Vogelsang Onion, his longtime
9 partner in public service and family life; the couple were the
10 devoted parents of three children, John, David, and Carol, and they
11 were further blessed with six grandchildren, Kate, Frances, John,
12 Scott, Paige, and Case; admired for his warmth, geniality, and good
13 humor, as well as his great wisdom, Judge Onion always had a joke or
14 anecdote ready to put a matter into perspective; and

15 WHEREAS, A towering figure in the history of Texas criminal
16 law jurisprudence, Judge Onion had a love of the law and a
17 determination to reach the right answer in every case, and his
18 legacy will live on in his many contributions to his profession and
19 in the cherished memories of his loved ones, friends, and
20 colleagues; now, therefore, be it

21 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 86th Texas
22 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life of the Honorable John F.
23 Onion Jr. and extend deepest condolences to his relatives and
24 friends; and, be it further

25 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
26 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of
27 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Judge John

H.R. No. 942

1 F. Onion Jr.

Landgraf

Bonnen of Brazoria	Guerra	Noble
Allen	Guillen	Oliverson
Allison	Gutierrez	Ortega
Anchia	Harless	Pacheco
Anderson	Harris	Paddie
Ashby	Hefner	Parker
Bailes	Hernandez	Patterson
Beckley	Herrero	Paul
Bell of Kaufman	Hinojosa	Perez
Bell of Montgomery	Holland	Phelan
Bernal	Howard	Price
Biedermann	Huberty	Ramos
Blanco	Hunter	Raney
Bohac	Israel	Raymond
Bonnen of Galveston	E. Johnson of Dallas	Reynolds
Bowers	J. Johnson of Dallas	Rodriguez
Buckley	Johnson of Harris	Romero, Jr.
Bucy	Kacal	Rose
Burns	King of Hemphill	Rosenthal
Burrows	King of Parker	Sanford
Button	King of Uvalde	Schaefer
Cain	Klick	Shaheen
Calanni	Krause	Sheffield
Canales	Kuempel	Sherman, Sr.
Capriglione	Lambert	Shine
Clardy	Landgraf	Smith
Cole	Lang	Smithee
Coleman	Larson	Springer
Collier	Leach	Stephenson
Cortez	Leman	Stickland
Craddick	Longoria	Stucky
Cyrrier	Lopez	Swanson
Darby	Lozano	Talarico
Davis of Dallas	Lucio III	Thierry
Davis of Harris	Martinez	Thompson of Brazoria
Dean	Martinez Fischer	Thompson of Harris
Deshotel	Metcalf	Tinderholt
Dominguez	Meyer	Toth
Dutton	Meza	Turner of Dallas
Farrar	Middleton	Turner of Tarrant
Fierro	Miller	VanDeaver
Flynn	Minjarez	Vo
Frank	Moody	Walle
Frullo	Morales	White
Geren	Morrison	Wilson
Gervin-Hawkins	Muñoz, Jr.	Wray
Goldman	Murphy	Wu
González of Dallas	Murr	Zedler
González of El Paso	Neave	Zerwas
Goodwin	Nevárez	Zwiener

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Speaker of the House

I certify that H.R. No. 942 was unanimously adopted by a rising vote of the House on March 27, 2019.

Chief Clerk of the House