

By: Hunter

H.R. No. 1302

R E S O L U T I O N

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

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

12 WHEREAS, Senator Schwartz was a staunch champion of Galveston
13 Island, and he fiercely defended its natural beauty and the
14 public's right to enjoy it; his monumental accomplishments included
15 legislation that serves as a foundation for much of the Texas
16 Coastal Management Plan; he was instrumental in the creation of the
17 1959 Open Beaches Act, and he later sponsored a constitutional
18 amendment that gave counties the right to regulate traffic on
19 beaches; in addition, he secured passage of measures to ban
20 littering on beaches and protect wetlands and freshwater inflows
21 into bays and estuaries; he was also responsible for legislation
22 that created the Park Board of Trustees, which oversees Galveston
23 beaches; and

24 WHEREAS, Known for his rapier wit and bold oratory, as well as

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

9 WHEREAS, Senator Schwartz served on every major committee and
10 held numerous leadership roles, chairing Natural Resources,
11 Coastal Lands and Water, Beach Study, Jurisprudence, Rules of the
12 Senate, and Military and Veterans Affairs; he further served as
13 chair of the Texas Coastal and Marine Council, the national Coastal
14 States Organization, and the Rights and Suffrage Committee of the
15 1974 Constitutional Convention; and

16 WHEREAS, After leaving public office, Senator Schwartz
17 continued his advocacy in the legislative sphere; innumerable
18 colleagues sought the benefit of his acumen and vast knowledge, as
19 well as the scintillation of his vivid stories and unvarnished
20 opinions; he helped create the Sea Grant Program at Texas A&M
21 University and contributed to the formation of the institution's
22 Galveston campus; he taught students at the University of Houston
23 Law Center, the UT Law School, and the Texas A&M campuses at
24 Galveston and Corpus Christi; in 2016, the City of Galveston
25 recognized his impact by naming "Babe's Beach" in his honor, and his
26 myriad accolades further included the inaugural Bob Eckhardt
27 Lifetime Coastal Achievement Award and the 1987 Distinguished

1 Service Award from the National Hurricane Conference,
2 acknowledging him as the first legislator in the nation to
3 recognize the need for hurricane preparedness; and

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

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

18 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 86th Texas
19 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life of the Honorable
20 A. R. "Babe" Schwartz and extend deep sympathy to all who mourn his
21 passing; and, be it 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 former
25 state senator A. R. "Babe" Schwartz.