

By: Cyrier

H.R. No. 1708

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, A full and generous life has drawn to a close with
2 the death of veteran West Texas aviator Wilson Connell Edwards Sr.
3 on May 3, 2019, at the age of 85; and

4 WHEREAS, Connie Edwards was born in Big Spring on April 25,
5 1934; after completing his education, he earned a pilot's license
6 and joined the Army National Guard in 1951, serving throughout the
7 Caribbean, Central America, and the United States over the next
8 nine years; in 1954, he and his brother, W. P. "Budo" Edwards,
9 established the Edwards Petroleum Company, and in 1959, the
10 brothers took over their family's ranching and petroleum operations
11 in Howard and Glasscock Counties; and

12 WHEREAS, In the late 1960s, Mr. Edwards was chief stunt pilot
13 for the movie *Battle of Britain*, flying a variety of World War II
14 military aircraft; during filming, he belly-landed a burning
15 Spitfire fighter plane with no injuries to himself or others,
16 earning a commendation from the Royal Air Force; he owned several
17 vintage aircraft, including a TBM Avenger torpedo bomber that
18 appeared in the films *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* and *Bermuda*
19 *Triangle*; and

20 WHEREAS, Mr. Edwards was a member of the Aircraft Owners and
21 Pilots Association and president of the Big Spring chapter of the
22 Air Force Association; he also served as accident prevention
23 counselor for the Lubbock district of the Federal Aviation
24 Administration and the U.S. Department of Transportation; in

1 addition, he was a director of State National Bank, and he cofounded
2 TexaStone Quarries; and

3 WHEREAS, This distinguished pilot earned many awards over the
4 years, including the Meritorious Service Award from the U.S. Navy,
5 the FAA Special Recognition Award, the President's Pilot Award, the
6 John Henry Towers Award from the Naval Aviation Commandery, the
7 Seaplane Pilot of the Year Award from the Seaplane Pilots
8 Association, and honorary wings from the U.S. Coast Guard and the
9 air forces of Britain, Spain, Canada, and Portugal; in 2016, he was
10 inducted into the Texas Aviation Hall of Fame; and

11 WHEREAS, In all his endeavors, Mr. Edwards enjoyed the love
12 and support of his wife, Brenda, and he was the proud father of
13 three children, Patricia, Nicholas, and the late Wilson C. "Tex"
14 Edwards; he was also devoted to his two stepdaughters, Stefanie and
15 Tonya, and his eight grandchildren, Andrew, Blake, Haylee, Daniel,
16 Emilee, Seth, Wilson, and Aislin; and

17 WHEREAS, Connie Edwards brought joy to innumerable people
18 through his warmth, wonderful sense of humor, and trove of amazing
19 stories, and his spirit of adventure will remain a source of
20 inspiration to all who were privileged to know him; now, therefore,
21 be it

22 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 86th Texas
23 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the memory of Wilson Connell
24 Edwards Sr. and extend heartfelt sympathy to his family and many
25 friends; and, be it further

26 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
27 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of

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1 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Connie
2 Edwards.