

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 626

In Memory
of
Virginia Nancy Birt Baker

WHEREAS, A rich and purposeful life drew to a close with the passing of Virginia Nancy Birt Baker on January 20, 2019, at the age of 89; and

WHEREAS, The former Ginny Birt was born on August 22, 1929, in Grand Rapids, Michigan, to Gladys and Charles Birt, and she grew up with the companionship of a sister, Catherine; she moved with her family to Texas at age 10 and went on to attend Highland Park High School and Southern Methodist University, where she graduated with a degree in interior design; and

WHEREAS, Seeking an opportunity to see the world, she traveled to Europe to work as a civilian for the United States Army and met her future husband, Charles "Chet" Baker, while in Gelnhausen, Germany; the couple wed in 1956, and over the course of a rewarding marriage that spanned 62 years, they became the parents of four treasured children, Juliette, Christopher, Nancy, and Matthew; later in life, Mrs. Baker was affectionately known as "Grammar" to her 19 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, In the 1960s, Mrs. Baker served as the textbooks chair for the Daughters of the American Revolution, a role in which she evaluated public school textbooks and testified numerous times before the State Textbook Committee; out of a strong desire to ensure that their children received a quality education, she and Mr. Baker decided to homeschool, and with the financial support and encouragement of her husband, Mrs. Baker became a tireless advocate for that method of instruction, publishing *Teaching Your Children at Home*, one of the first manuals for parents; in addition, she spoke at homeschool seminars and conferences in many states, wrote for national homeschool publications, testified on behalf of home education on numerous occasions, and was well-known for compiling a leaflet titled *You Ask Me Why?*, which was distributed to tens of thousands of legislators, parents, and educators across the nation; and

WHEREAS, Over the years, Mrs. Baker received several notable honors, including Trailblazers Awards from the Texas Home Educators and the Pioneer Award and the Taking a Stand in Texas award from the Texas Home School Coalition; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Baker was also active with the Reading Reform Foundation and was a frequent speaker at its seminars; she was a longtime member of such societies as the Magna Charta Dames, the Daughters of Founders and Patriots of America, and the Sons and Daughters of the Pilgrims, and her research and writing covered genealogy, politics, history, and biblical studies; and

WHEREAS, Ginny Baker generously shared her time, knowledge, and expertise in her quest to empower parents to make the best decisions for their children's education, and she will forever be remembered with deep admiration and affection by her loved ones and by those whose lives were touched by her work; now, therefore, be it

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RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 86th Legislature, hereby pay tribute to the memory of Virginia Nancy Birt Baker and extend heartfelt sympathy to her relatives and friends; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this Resolution be prepared for her family and that when the Texas Senate adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Ginny Baker.

Hughes

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on April 25, 2019, by a rising vote.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate