

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 711

In Memory
of
Walter Derrick

WHEREAS, The citizens of Gladewater are mourning the loss of a beloved public servant, friend, and neighbor with the passing of former mayor Walter Derrick on April 1, 2019, at the age of 88; and

WHEREAS, Born in Gilmer on April 8, 1930, Walter Derrick graduated as valedictorian of Weldon High School in Gladewater; he served his country as a member of the United States Army, and he later resumed his education and earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Texas College in Tyler, in addition to undertaking studies at Huston-Tillotson College, Stephen F. Austin State University, East Tennessee State College, and The University of Texas at Tyler; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Derrick was hired as a teacher and coach for the Gladewater Independent School District, and he led the football team of his alma mater, Weldon High, to a 1968 state finals berth in the Prairie View Interscholastic League; he further distinguished himself by becoming the first African American coach hired at Gladewater High School; later, he ran for a seat on the Gladewater City Council, where he served for 22 years and as mayor pro tempore for 15 years; his public service career culminated with a four-year term as the city's first African American mayor and subsequently ended with his retirement from public office in 2012; in recent years, a street in the city was named in his honor; and

WHEREAS, Dedicated to enhancing the quality of life in Gladewater, Mayor Derrick was instrumental in the creation of Bumblebee Park and in a host of other major improvement projects; he was also active with the East Texas Council of Governments, Gladewater Habitat for Humanity, and myriad other groups, and he was involved in distributing as much as \$100,000 in scholarships to local students through his work on the Gladewater Round-Up Rodeo Association Board of Trustees; a man of faith, he served as a treasurer and as deacon board chair at Pine Grove Missionary Baptist Church in Gilmer; and

WHEREAS, In all his endeavors, Mayor Derrick was blessed with the love and support of his wife of 63 years, EverGrace Derrick, and his children, Lanita Derrick-Smith, Rory Derrick, and the late Eduardo Derrick, who preceded his father in death; he took special pride in his grandchildren, Derrick, Andree', Damien, Dana, Kamryn, Aubry, and Ebony, and great-grandchildren, Amillion and Damien; and

WHEREAS, Walter Derrick cared deeply about his community and gave generously of his time and talents to make it a better place for all, and though he is greatly missed, his legacy lives on in the hearts of the many people whose lives he touched; 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 Walter Derrick and extend sincere sympathy to his relatives and many friends; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this Resolution be prepared for his family and that when the Senate adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Walter Derrick.

Hughes

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on May 8, 2019, by a rising vote.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate