87R22791 JGH-D

By:  Leman H.R. No. 901

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, The 100th birthday of an esteemed Texan is truly cause for celebration, and Finus Odell Tyler of Sealy reached that impressive milestone in his life on April 11, 2021; and

WHEREAS, Born in 1921 in Nacogdoches County to Benton and Pearl Tyler, Finus Tyler grew up with four younger brothers and sisters; answering his nation's call to duty during World War II, he served from 1941 to 1945 with the 1317th Engineer General Service Regiment, and following his honorable discharge, he earned a bachelor's degree from Prairie View A&M University; he later returned to Prairie View to earn a master's degree; and

WHEREAS, Settling in Bellville, Mr. Tyler became the first Black county extension agent in Austin County, and he helped the students of the 4H program win the Texas State Swine Show; after moving to Sealy, he worked as a coach, agriculture teacher, and bus driver for the Austin County Colored School before becoming one of the first Black faculty members at Sealy High School, where he taught agriculture for 34 years; he served as sponsor of the NFHA Livestock Show and won the Texas Leadership Contest, and he received the Texas Teacher Training Award and the Outstanding Teaching Award from the Prairie View Alumni Association; and

WHEREAS, In addition to his professional contributions, Mr. Tyler has been a leader in his community, serving for 25 years on the Sealy Planning Commission and for five years on the Sealy Library Board, where he helped establish the city's first public library; he also served on the board of the youth mentoring organization Raising Academic Performance, and in 2013, he was one of the first Black grand marshals of the Austin County Fair Parade and Livestock Show; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Tyler continues to serve as a member of the Sealy Eastside Foundation, the Prairie View Alumni Association, and the board of Helping One Another Meals on Wheels, Inc., of Austin County; a longtime congregant of Bethel Baptist Church of Sealy, he was the Sunday school superintendent for 55 years, and he is currently chair of the deacon board; and

WHEREAS, While still in college, Mr. Tyler married Esther Johnson, and they had three children together, Theadra, Yvette, and David; following the death of his first wife, he was fortunate enough to find a new love, L. E. Sadler, and after she passed away, he was joined in matrimony to Jo Evelyn Owens; today, he is the proud patriarch of a family that also includes five grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren, and seven stepchildren; and

WHEREAS, Over the course of a century, Finus Tyler not only served his nation, but has also met the challenges and opportunities of a long life with grace and dignity, and on his special day, he is blessed with the deep respect and lasting affection of a host of loved ones; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 87th Texas Legislature hereby congratulate Finus Odell Tyler on his 100th birthday and extend to him sincere best wishes for continued happiness; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be prepared for Mr. Tyler as an expression of high regard by the Texas House of Representatives.