H.R. No. 1163

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, The State of Texas lost a communications pioneer and wise political counselor with the death of Julian Otis Read of Austin on May 8, 2021, at the age of 93; and

WHEREAS, Born outside of Fort Worth on June 8, 1927, Julian Read was the son of Tillie Naomi Swaim and James Otis Read, who moved into town to provide educational opportunities for their son and his sister, Opal; when he was just 18, Mr. Read began his career as a copy boy and hard-charging cub reporter for the now-legendary *Fort Worth Press*; he also took freelance work, including publicity for a promising young singer named Elvis Presley; in 1951, at the dawn of the advertising age, he launched a public relations and ad agency out of a one-room apartment, and only later did he complete his economics degree at Texas Christian University; and

WHEREAS, His company, Read-Poland, grew into a powerhouse with five offices in Texas and another in the nation's capital; its host of business clients included the San Antonio HemisFair, Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport, Southwest Airlines, and Disney's World on Ice; during the Cold War, Mr. Read helped the skating show part the Iron Curtain to perform in Eastern Europe; he was instrumental in wearing down decades of resistance to the revolutionary Bell-Boeing V-22 Osprey tilt rotor aircraft, leading to its successful implementation by the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps; by transfiguring the television show of University of Texas football coach Darrell Royal, he created a national model for such sports programs; and

WHEREAS, In 1954, he guided the congressional campaign of the mayor of Weatherford, Jim Wright, who scored a major upset and went on to become speaker of the House; Mr. Read advised the campaigns of six U.S. presidents, from both parties; in 1961, John Connally asked him to run his first gubernatorial campaign, and his victorious strategy incorporated five-minute "Coffee with Connally" TV spots, an innovative use of the medium; he formed a lasting bond with Governor Connally's family, and as his press secretary, Mr. Read was liaison to the White House press corps traveling to Dallas with President John F. Kennedy on November 22, 1963; having witnessed the assassination from his place in the motorcade, he rushed to the side of the governor's wife at Parkland Hospital; he received her account and delivered to the international media the first briefing from a perspective inside the presidential limousine; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Read completed the merger of Read-Poland with global communications giant Burson Cohn & Wolfe in 2001, and he maintained a presence in the Austin office until his passing; in addition, he wrote a book, *JFK's Final Hours in Texas*, published by UT's Briscoe Center for American History in 2013; and

WHEREAS, Over the years, Mr. Read often proclaimed himself the luckiest man in the world for having married Mary Anice Barber, on April 12, 1952; they became the parents of two daughters, Ellen and Courtney, and their treasured family eventually grew to include three grandchildren, Faye, Katherine, and Clark, as well as three great-grandchildren, Anice, Juliana, and Asher; the couple shared a deep interest in historic preservation, and Mrs. Read was the founder of the Texas Main Street Program at the Texas Historical Commission, while Mr. Read served as a member of Friends of the THC, the Austin History Center, the LBJ Presidential Library, and the Briscoe Center, where his extensive archives are housed; he continued his efforts following Mrs. Read's death in 1999; and

WHEREAS, Julian Read left his imprint on Texas history and earned the admiration of all who knew him, not only for his remarkable accomplishments, but also for his kindness and generosity, and he will forever hold a special place in the hearts of his loved ones and legions of friends; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 87th Texas Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life of Julian Otis Read and extend sincere condolences to all who mourn his passing; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Julian Read.

Hinojosa

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Speaker of the House

I certify that H.R. No. 1163 was unanimously adopted by a rising vote of the House on May 23, 2021.

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Chief Clerk of the House