

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 419

In Memory
of
James T. Willerson

WHEREAS, The Senate of the State of Texas honors and commemorates the life of Dr. James T. Willerson, who died September 16, 2020; and

WHEREAS, James Willerson was an exemplary citizen and a highly esteemed physician whose research in the field of cardiovascular medicine had a positive impact on the lives of countless people; and

WHEREAS, Born on November 16, 1939, Dr. Willerson graduated Phi Beta Kappa from The University of Texas at Austin, where he was a four-year letterman in swimming and was a member of the Texas Cowboys and the Phi Gamma Delta Fraternity; he earned his medical degree from Baylor College of Medicine and he received his postgraduate training at Harvard Medical School and the Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston; and

WHEREAS, He was widely known for his exceptional skill in diagnosing and treating patients, and he cared for more than 3,000 patients in his medical practice; during the COVID-19 pandemic, he continued to see patients daily, up until shortly before the time of his passing; he was noted for his warm and personable manner, and he was trusted and admired for the attentive care and sense of priority with which he treated each of his patients; and

WHEREAS, He concentrated his medical research on the detection and treatment of unstable atherosclerotic plaques and on the discovery of the genes and abnormal proteins responsible for cardiovascular disease; he was awarded 15 patents as a result of his research, and he cofounded four biotechnology start-up companies that translated his research team's discoveries into clinical practice; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Willerson was one of the longest-serving editors-in-chief of *Circulation*, a prestigious journal of the American Heart Association; in addition, he edited or coedited 27 textbooks and published more than 1,030 articles in major scientific journals, and he served as a visiting professor and lecturer at more than 260 institutions worldwide; and

WHEREAS, He and his former wife of 43 years, Nancy Beamer Willerson, were blessed with two daughters, Sara Willerson and Dr. Amy Willerson; his grandchildren, James, Grace, and Thomas Suerth, were a source of much pride and joy for him; and

WHEREAS, A world-renowned researcher and medical expert and a talented and devoted physician, Dr. James Willerson dedicated himself to the pursuit of discovery and advancement in the field of cardiovascular medicine; he was honored with numerous accolades from around the globe that are bestowed for the highest achievements in medical practice, research, and leadership, and his invaluable contributions to his field will continue to benefit future generations for years to come; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 87th Legislature, hereby extend sincere condolences to the bereaved family of Dr. James T. Willerson; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be prepared for his family as an expression of deepest sympathy from the Texas Senate and that when the Senate adjourns this day, it do so in memory of James Willerson.

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President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on May 17, 2021, by a rising vote.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate