

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The residents of Abilene lost an admired champion of
2 higher education and friend to all with the passing of former state
3 representative Dr. Robert D. Hunter on February 11, 2023, at the
4 age of 94; and

5 WHEREAS, The son of Grover Cleveland Hunter and Grace May
6 Grubb Hunter, Bob Hunter was born in Dodge City, Kansas, on June 25,
7 1928; he grew up with 11 siblings, and after moving to California,
8 he graduated from high school in San Mateo; he relocated to Texas to
9 enroll at Abilene Christian College, beginning a lifelong
10 affiliation with the institution that would later become Abilene
11 Christian University; a leader in campus life during his
12 undergraduate years, he sang in the A Cappella Chorus and Men's
13 Quartet and served as president of several organizations; he was
14 also vice president of the Student Association and a statewide
15 officer in the Texas Intercollegiate Student Association; after
16 completing his bachelor's degree in business, he served in the U.S.
17 Navy during the Korean War, both in the Far East and with the
18 National Security Agency in Washington, D.C.; and

19 WHEREAS, Dr. Hunter returned to his beloved college alma
20 mater as director of special events, and in 1957, he was named its
21 first director of alumni relations; later, as assistant to the
22 president, he directed the 10-year Design for Development that led
23 to the construction of many new buildings; he eventually rose to
24 become senior vice president, a role that encompassed government

1 relations, before his retirement in 1993; committed to enriching
2 the student and alumni experience, he originated more than two
3 dozen ACU traditions, including Freshman Follies, the Parade of
4 Flags at Opening Assembly, the President's Circle Dinner, the
5 annual alumni awards program, Sing Song, and the Homecoming
6 Musical; he was known for his warm smile and trademark greeting,
7 "Hello, friend," and his tremendous enthusiasm and congeniality
8 helped define the ACU spirit; and

9 WHEREAS, In the 1970s, Dr. Hunter also served the wider
10 community during a term on the Abilene City Council; from 1970 to
11 1980, he was executive vice president of the Independent Colleges
12 and Universities of Texas, and he galvanized support for the
13 legislation creating the Tuition Equalization Grant program; since
14 its establishment, students at private institutions in the state
15 have received Tuition Equalization Grants totaling more than
16 \$2.6 billion; and

17 WHEREAS, Dr. Hunter became the first Taylor County
18 Republican to win a seat in the Texas House of Representatives when
19 he was elected in 1986, and he was returned to office in the next 10
20 elections; working tirelessly in behalf of his constituents and
21 higher education in general, he missed just a single roll-call vote
22 over the course of two decades, when his doctors refused his pleas
23 to release him while he was being evaluated for a possible heart
24 attack; for a decade, he chaired the Committee on State, Federal and
25 International Relations, and he later led the House Research
26 Organization; and

27 WHEREAS, In 1990, Representative Hunter championed

1 legislation to enable Cisco College to build a campus in Abilene;
2 when the bill faced a potential veto from Governor William
3 P. Clements, who was displeased with a previous vote by the
4 representative, Dr. Hunter selflessly removed his name from the
5 legislation, and the measure became law; the next year, he was
6 appointed chair of the Higher Education Subcommittee on Budget and
7 Oversight, bringing to that role his deep expertise in the state's
8 dual system of higher education; in addition, he was vice chair for
9 the Committee on Regulated Industries and co-chair of the Special
10 House Select Committee on NAFTA and GATT international trade
11 agreements; no matter how stressful the situation, he lived up to
12 his nickname, "Smilin' Bob," and he brightened the days and earned
13 the affection of countless people in the Capitol community; and

14 WHEREAS, Dr. Hunter further benefited Abilene as a member of
15 the boards and advisory boards of numerous organizations, among
16 them the Classical Chorus of Abilene, Meals on Wheels, the West
17 Texas Rehabilitation Center, the Boys & Girls Clubs, and the
18 Abilene/Taylor County Child Advocacy Center; moreover, he was a
19 lifetime member of the VFW and the American Legion and, for over a
20 half century, he was an active member of University Church of
21 Christ; and

22 WHEREAS, The recipient of myriad accolades, Dr. Hunter was
23 awarded honorary doctorates by ACU, Texas Wesleyan University, the
24 University of St. Thomas, Austin College, Hardin-Simmons
25 University, McMurry University, and Pepperdine University in
26 California; in February 2006, ACU named its Robert D. and Shirley
27 Hunter Welcome Center in honor of Dr. Hunter and his wife; the

1 couple married on May 27, 1954, and they were blessed with three
2 children, Kent, Carole, and Les, as well as numerous grandchildren
3 and great-grandchildren; Mrs. Hunter passed away in 2021; and

4 WHEREAS, The loss of Bob Hunter is keenly felt by the
5 multitude of friends that he made and the many people whose lives he
6 forever enriched, but his enormous contributions will continue to
7 resonate in the years to come, and he will forever hold a special
8 place in the hearts of all who were fortunate enough to know him;
9 now, therefore, be it

10 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 88th Texas
11 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the memory of the Honorable
12 Dr. Robert D. Hunter and extend sincere condolences to the members
13 of his family: to his children and their spouses, Kent Hunter and
14 Jonathan Blumberg, Carole Phillips and her husband, Danny, and Les
15 Hunter; to his grandchildren and their spouses, Landon and Jennifer
16 Phillips, Chad and Aundrea Phillips, Mitchell and Emily Danesi,
17 Dino Hunter, and Lyra Hunter; to his great-grandchildren, Crawford
18 Danesi, Henley Danesi, Beckham Phillips, and Kenzo Phillips; and to
19 his other relatives and friends; and, be it further

20 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
21 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of
22 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Dr. Bob
23 Hunter.

Lambert

Phelan	Guerra	Murr
Allen	Guillen	Neave Criado
Allison	Harless	Noble
Anchía	Harris of Anderson	Oliverson
Anderson	Harris of Williamson	Ordaz
Ashby	Harrison	Orr
Bailes	Hayes	Ortega
Bell of Kaufman	Hefner	Patterson
Bell of Montgomery	Hernandez	Paul
Bernal	Herrero	Perez
Bhojani	Hinojosa	Plesa
Bonnen	Holland	Price
Bowers	Howard	Ramos
Bryant	Hull	Raney
Buckley	Hunter	Raymond
Bucy	Isaac	Reynolds
Bumgarner	Jetton	Rogers
Burns	Johnson of Dallas	Romero, Jr.
Burrows	A. Johnson of Harris	Rose
Button	J. Johnson of Harris	Rosenthal
Cain	Jones of Dallas	Schaefer
Campos	Jones of Harris	Schatzline
Canales	Kacal	Schofield
Capriglione	King of Hemphill	Shaheen
Clardy	King of Uvalde	Sherman, Sr.
Cole	Kitzman	Shine
Collier	Klick	Slawson
Cook	Kuempel	Smith
Cortez	Lalani	Smithee
Craddick	Lambert	Spiller
Cunningham	Landgraf	Stucky
Darby	Leach	Swanson
Davis	Leo-Wilson	Talarico
Dean	Longoria	Tepper
DeAyala	Lopez of Bexar	Thierry
Dorazio	Lopez of Cameron	Thimesch
Dutton	Lozano	Thompson of Brazoria
Flores	Lujan	Thompson of Harris
Frank	Manuel	Tinderholt
Frazier	Martinez	Toth
Gamez	Martinez Fischer	Troxclair
Garcia	Metcalf	Turner
Gates	Meyer	VanDeaver
Gerdes	Meza	Vasut
Geren	Moody	Vo
Gervin-Hawkins	Morales of Harris	Walle
Goldman	Morales of Maverick	Wilson
González of Dallas	Morales Shaw	Wu
González of El Paso	Morrison	Zwiener
Goodwin	Muñoz, Jr.	

H.R. No. 1555

Speaker of the House

I certify that H.R. No. 1555 was unanimously adopted by a rising vote of the House on May 16, 2023.

Chief Clerk of the House