

By: Morales Shaw

H.R. No. 30

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Residents of Houston lost a political icon and
2 fierce champion of social justice with the passing of
3 U.S. Representative Sheila Jackson Lee on July 19, 2024, at the age
4 of 74; and

5 WHEREAS, The daughter of Ezra Jackson and Ivalita Bennett
6 Jackson, the former Sheila Jackson was born in New York City on
7 January 12, 1950, and grew up in the borough of Queens; she earned a
8 bachelor's degree in political science as a member of Yale
9 University's first co-ed class and went on to complete her law
10 degree at the University of Virginia; following her marriage to
11 Elwyn Lee, a Houston native, she became the proud mother of two
12 children, Jason and Erica; and

13 WHEREAS, In 1978, Congresswoman Jackson Lee moved to the
14 Bayou City with her husband and began working for the Fulbright &
15 Jaworski law firm; appointed as a municipal judge in 1987, she later
16 became a highly effective member of the city council; she won her
17 first congressional race in 1994 and was reelected 14 times, never
18 with less than 70 percent of the vote; known for her formidable work
19 ethic, she filed scores of bills addressing the needs of the most
20 vulnerable, and she did not hesitate to work across the aisle to
21 pass them; after the Violence Against Women Act expired in 2019, she
22 fought for its reenactment and authored the legislation that
23 achieved that goal; she was also the author and lead sponsor of the
24 Juneteenth National Independence Day Act, which established the

1 first new federal holiday in nearly four decades; her many other
2 major initiatives included the Sentencing Reform Act, Paycheck
3 Fairness Act, and George Floyd Law Enforcement Trust and Integrity
4 Act; known for her passionate speeches on the House floor, she
5 advocated for gay rights long before mainstream acceptance of the
6 movement and continued to serve as a powerful voice for progressive
7 causes, including Black Lives Matter and gun control; she took her
8 message to innumerable media outlets as well; most recently, she
9 lent her support to a federal version of the CROWN Act to prevent
10 discrimination based on hairstyles favored by people of color; and

11 WHEREAS, Congresswoman Jackson Lee held numerous leadership
12 roles, including chair of the Judiciary Subcommittee for Crime,
13 Terrorism, and Homeland Security and senior member of the
14 Judiciary, Homeland Security, and Budget Committees; she was the
15 House Democrats' chief deputy whip, chair of the Congressional
16 Black Caucus Energy Braintrust, co-chair of the Justice Reform Task
17 Force, and a founder and chair of the Congressional Pakistan Caucus
18 and the Congressional Children's Caucus; *Congressional Quarterly*
19 ranked her among the 50 most effective members of Congress; and

20 WHEREAS, Devoted to her constituents, Congresswoman Jackson
21 Lee was instrumental in directing billions of federal dollars to
22 under-resourced communities; she helped her city recover from
23 numerous natural disasters and other crises, even personally
24 directing traffic to a COVID-19 testing site at the height of the
25 pandemic and unloading food and supplies for residents during the
26 2021 freeze; over the years, she appeared at countless local
27 meetings and events, and she demonstrated deep compassion to those

1 suffering loss, attending funerals, extending words of comfort, and
2 connecting the bereaved with support services; and

3 WHEREAS, Sheila Jackson Lee was a fearless warrior in behalf
4 of freedom, democracy, and positive change, and although she will
5 be greatly missed, her exceptional contributions will continue to
6 resonate in the years to come; now, therefore, be it

7 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 89th Texas
8 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life of Sheila Jackson Lee and
9 extend sincere condolences to the members of her family: to her
10 husband, Elwyn Lee; to her children, Jason and Erica Lee; to her
11 grandchildren, Ellison Bennett Carter and Roy Lee Carter III; and
12 to her other relatives, her many friends, and all who mourn her
13 passing; and, be it further

14 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
15 prepared for her family and that when the Texas House of
16 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Sheila
17 Jackson Lee.