

By: Ashby

H.R. No. 863

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Former state representative James R. Pitts of  
2 Waxahachie passed away on July 20, 2024, at the age of 77, bringing  
3 a great loss to his family and friends and to the State of Texas; and

4 WHEREAS, The son of Agnes and Roy Pitts, Jim Pitts was born in  
5 Dallas on January 1, 1947, and he grew up with the companionship of  
6 his older sister, Rosemary, and identical twin, John; he graduated  
7 from Jesuit High School and went on to attend Southern Methodist  
8 University, where he earned bachelor's and master's degrees in  
9 business administration as well as a juris doctor degree; and

10 WHEREAS, Mr. Pitts began his legal career as an associate in  
11 the law office of Lynn G. Griffith, and in 1984, he established his  
12 own firm in Waxahachie; he continued to practice law throughout his  
13 life; he also owned Ellis County Title Company, where he served as  
14 board chair and legal counsel; and

15 WHEREAS, Active in his community, Mr. Pitts was a member of  
16 the Waxahachie Chamber of Commerce, and he served on its board of  
17 directors and later became board president; in addition, he was  
18 involved in the Waxahachie Lions Club, the Community Advisory  
19 Council for Scottish Rite Learning Center, and the Waxahachie  
20 Foundation, and he held leadership positions with Citizens National  
21 Bank of Texas, Nicholas P. Sims Library, Presbyterian Children's  
22 Services, Broadway Dallas, ZACH Theatre in Austin, and the Baylor  
23 Scott & White Medical Board in Waxahachie; and

24 WHEREAS, Mr. Pitts won election to the Waxahachie

1 Independent School District Board of Trustees in 1978, and he held  
2 that seat for 14 years and served as the board's president; in 1992,  
3 he successfully ran for the District 10 seat in the Texas House of  
4 Representatives; he was sworn into office in January 1993, and over  
5 the course of his tenure, he worked tirelessly in behalf of his  
6 constituents; he was an avid supporter of area school districts,  
7 and he contributed to a variety of projects benefiting the  
8 residents of Ellis, Hill, and Henderson Counties; he also authored  
9 the resolution that designated Waxahachie as the Crape Myrtle  
10 Capital of Texas; and

11 WHEREAS, During his 11 terms in office, Mr. Pitts was a  
12 member of numerous committees; he was first appointed to the  
13 appropriations committee in 1997, and he went on to serve as its  
14 chair for a decade; in that position, he took on the important task  
15 of overseeing the development of the state's budget, and he  
16 championed wise financial stewardship; in addition, he held  
17 leadership roles with several appropriations subcommittees as well  
18 as with a number of other committees, including ways and means and  
19 government reform; and

20 WHEREAS, Among his many achievements, Mr. Pitts was named to  
21 the Ten Best Legislators list by *Texas Monthly* in 2005, 2009, and  
22 2013; he concluded his career in the Texas House in January 2015,  
23 following more than two decades of distinguished public service; in  
24 his retirement, he continued to work on key issues in the  
25 legislature as the founder of Jim Pitts Consulting; and

26 WHEREAS, Mr. Pitts married the former Evelyn Eastham on  
27 May 22, 1971, and the couple shared a rewarding union that spanned

1 33 years before Mrs. Pitts tragically passed away in 2004; they  
2 were the proud parents of three children, Duffy, Ashley, and Ryan,  
3 and over the years, their treasured family grew to include six  
4 grandchildren, Jackson, Owen, Will, Margaret, Evelyn, and James  
5 Reagan; he was a steadfast source of encouragement for his children  
6 and grandchildren, and he took great pleasure in hosting guests at  
7 his home; and

8 WHEREAS, An esteemed legislator, attorney, and community  
9 leader, Jim Pitts exemplified the highest ideals of public service,  
10 and his contributions to his fellow Texans will be remembered and  
11 admired for years to come; now, therefore, be it

12 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 89th Texas  
13 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the memory of the Honorable  
14 James R. Pitts and extend heartfelt sympathy to his family and many  
15 friends; and, be it further

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