WHEREAS, The certain knowledge of a life well lived may comfort those saddened by the death of Will David Davis Sr., who passed away on December 12, 2016, at the age of 87; and

WHEREAS, Born in Houston on July 18, 1929, Will Davis was the son of David Davis and Nita Barnett Davis; in 1934, he moved to Austin with his mother, and five years later, when he was only nine, he became the youngest page to serve the Texas Legislature; he worked during three sessions to help provide for his family; and

WHEREAS, After graduating from Austin High School, Mr. Davis went on to play football for Lamar University and then Baylor University, where he completed his bachelor's and law degrees; he was a member of the Baylor team that played in the 1951 Orange Bowl, and he won election as president of the student body; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Davis was hired as an assistant attorney general, and in 1957, he was appointed general counsel of the Texas Department of Insurance by Governor Price Daniel; three years later, he joined his uncle, W. W. Heath, as a partner in the firm that became Heath, Davis, and McCalla; in 2010, he took on the role of counsel to Thompson Coe, and he retired the following year; and

WHEREAS, Over the course of his distinguished career, Mr. Davis represented major insurance companies, insurance holding companies, and insurance trade associations; he became general counsel for the Texas Association of Life and Health Insurers at its inception in 1997, having served one of its predecessor
organizations for many years; in addition, he served as outside
general counsel and as a member of advising boards of directors and
management for several insurance companies; he frequently
represented insurance company clients before the Texas
Legislature, and as an insurance industry representative, he was
instrumental in the drafting of laws that are now part of the Texas
Insurance Code; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Davis was very engaged in the political arena,
and in the 1960s, he served as chair of the Texas Democratic Party
and of the Texas State Democratic Conventions; moreover, he was a
delegate to both state and national conventions and served in many
campaigns and on many gubernatorial inauguration committees; and

WHEREAS, Because his mother had been a teacher, Mr. Davis
felt called to support public education and professionals in the
field through his leadership; he was a member of the Austin
Independent School District Board of Trustees for 16 years and
served three terms as president; in 1978, he was president of the
National School Boards Association, and he served as an officer for
seven years; and

WHEREAS, At the state level, Mr. Davis was president of the
Texas Association of School Boards; he was a member of the
Governor's Select Committee on Public Education, which made
recommendations for major reforms that were adopted by the
legislature in the 1984 Special Session as House Bill 72; in
addition, he was elected to the Texas State Board of Education and
his tenure, which spanned more than a decade, included a term as
vice chair; and
WHEREAS, Mr. Davis benefited higher education as well; one of the original seven founders of Austin Community College, he became inaugural president of the board of trustees in 1972, and following three terms, he remained a board member until 1982; during that time, enrollment grew to more than 20,000 students, and today, ACC is one of the largest community colleges in Texas; he was also chair of the Baylor University Board of Regents from 2004 to 2006 and served as a regent for almost two decades; and

WHEREAS, The recipient of myriad accolades for his professional and civic accomplishments, Mr. Davis was accorded Baylor's Distinguished Alumni Award, the Price Daniel "Pro Texana" Distinguished Public Service Award, and the "Pro Texana" Award; in 1991, AISD paid tribute to his achievements with the opening of the Will D. Davis Elementary School, and nine years later, the Texas Association of School Boards named its office the Will D. Davis Building; the Insurance Council of Texas presented him with its Raymond Mauk Award for leadership in 2010, and two years later, TALHI conferred on him its first Will Davis Leadership Award; and

WHEREAS, A devoted family man, Mr. Davis shared a rewarding marriage of 57 years with Ann Byargeon Davis before her passing; he took great pride in his children, Lisa Davis, Lynn Davis Walker, and Will Davis Jr., as well as in his nine grandchildren, Katelyn Baroch, Allie Frazier, Becca Jahnke, Bill Walker III, Davis Walker, Natalie Betzer, Will Davis III, Emily Boone, and Sara Regan, and five great-grandchildren, Davis and Blake Baroch, Annaleigh Frazier, Mary Carson Walker, and William "Liam" A. Walker IV; he was a valued member of Hyde Park Baptist Church and taught young married
couples in Sunday school for many years; and

WHEREAS, Will Davis left a lasting imprint on the Lone Star State through his outstanding contributions, and although he is deeply missed by those he left behind, they will continue to find inspiration in his irreproachable character and his dedication to his family, his faith, and his fellow citizens; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the 85th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby pay tribute to the memory of Will David Davis Sr. and extend sincere sympathy to his loved ones; 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 and Senate adjourn this day, they do so in memory of Will David Davis Sr.

Smithee
I certify that H.C.R. No. 68 was unanimously adopted by a rising vote of the House on March 16, 2017.

I certify that H.C.R. No. 68 was unanimously adopted by a rising vote of the Senate on March 21, 2017.

APPROVED: 4-5-2017

Date

Governor