

By: Nevarez

H.R. No. 2559

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, The Lone Star State lost an accomplished native son  
2 with the passing of the Honorable Richard C. Slack of Pecos, a man  
3 who retired as Dean of the Texas House after 28 years of outstanding  
4 service only to later share his leadership again to the benefit of  
5 all as a member of the Texas Ethics Commission for more than a  
6 decade; and

7           WHEREAS, The grandson of Henry Slack, one of the contestants  
8 in the world's first rodeo, held in Pecos, Dick Slack was also a  
9 trailblazer; he was born on December 20, 1914, to Ruby Stephens and  
10 Henry Clay Slack, Jr., and as a young man earned his bachelor's  
11 degree in petroleum engineering from Texas A&M University; he  
12 returned to his hometown and worked as a roughneck before  
13 purchasing the Magnolia Oil distributorship there, and in 1940, he  
14 joined the U.S. Army as a member of the Texas 36th Division; and

15           WHEREAS, Mr. Slack saw combat during World War II, on  
16 deployments to North Africa, Italy, France, and Germany, and he was  
17 awarded the Bronze Star for valor for his courageous actions during  
18 an artillery exchange in Italy in 1944; after the war, he joined the  
19 Texas National Guard and helped organize and lead the 124th Cavalry  
20 Recon Squadron headquartered in Pecos, and in 1965, he entered the  
21 Retired Reserve with the rank of colonel; and

22           WHEREAS, Mr. Slack began his career in public service in  
23 1948, when he was elected to the first of two terms as county judge  
24 of Reeves County; he successfully ran for state representative in

1 1952 and soon became known among his fellow legislators for his dry  
2 wit, his intelligence, and his independent conservative thinking;  
3 juggling the demands of his new role with his professional  
4 responsibilities, he added law school to his priorities, and  
5 following graduation from St. Mary's, he was admitted to the state  
6 bar in 1956; he was chosen as speaker pro tem for the 64th and 65th  
7 Legislative Sessions, and he was recognized as Dean of the House  
8 during his last years in office; along the way, he served on more  
9 than 35 committees, chairing many, and he helped to establish The  
10 University of Texas of the Permian Basin and the Texas Tech  
11 University Health Sciences Center in Odessa; and

12       WHEREAS, A leader in business and civic life as well, Mr.  
13 Slack was the founder of Presidio Bank and a member of the board of  
14 directors of the First National Bank of Pecos and the Red Bluff  
15 Water Power Control District; he returned to statewide service in  
16 1992 with his appointment to the Texas Ethics Commission, which he  
17 served on for 11 years and chaired for two of those years before  
18 stepping down in 2003; and

19       WHEREAS, This esteemed Texan met his wife, the former  
20 Charlotte Tonroy, during his freshman year in the house of  
21 representatives, where she was a third-year law student working as  
22 a legislative clerk; the couple married in August 1953, and through  
23 the years, they were blessed with three children, Anne, Clay, and  
24 Cynthia; they later delighted in welcoming into their family seven  
25 grandchildren and a great-granddaughter; and

26       WHEREAS, Vibrant and engaged, Dick Slack lived life to the  
27 fullest, pursuing his love of skeet shooting even in his late

1 nineties, and his penchant for storytelling spoke volumes about the  
2 enthusiasm he brought to all his endeavors over the course of nearly  
3 a century of purposeful achievement; and

4 WHEREAS, The State of Texas benefited immensely from the  
5 vision, initiative, and dedication of Dick Slack, and he leaves  
6 behind a record of public service that will continue to inspire  
7 others for many years to come; now, therefore, be it

8 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 83rd Texas  
9 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the memory of the Honorable  
10 Richard C. Slack and extend sincere sympathy to the members of his  
11 family: to his wife, Charlotte Tonroy Slack; to his children, Anne  
12 Mackey and her husband, Doug, Clay Slack and his wife, Ann, and  
13 Cynthia Shaw and her husband, Stan; to his grandchildren, Sarah  
14 Faulkner Staley and her husband, Mark, Dugger Faulkner, Trey and  
15 Robert Slack, and Margaret, David, and Sara Shaw; to his  
16 great-granddaughter, Elizabeth Staley; and to his other relatives  
17 and friends; and, be it further

18 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
19 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of  
20 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of former  
21 state representative Dick Slack.