



A Resolution Honoring the Life, Wisdom & Leadership of James A. Leonard: 1930-2013

WHEREAS James A. Leonard died September 12th, 2013 following a life rich with stunning achievement in his home city of Lakeway, Texas at the age of 82, a month short of his 83d birthday;

WHEREAS James Aloysius Leonard was born in Brooklyn, New York, to Jay & Florence Leonard, was raised in Fort Worth, Texas, and graduated from the University of Texas in 1951 after working summers on oil rigs;

WHEREAS James A. Leonard served in the Air Force during the Korean War;

WHEREAS James A. Leonard, despite the Republican Party in Texas at that time being no more than an agency for Post Office patronage, in 1960 announced his candidacy for the Texas Senate as a Republican, and lost in a vast West Texas district when a Republican running for local office in Texas was a ridiculous notion;

WHEREAS James A. Leonard in early 1961, while continuing to build his fledgling oil business, agreed to serve as the first Executive Director of the Republican Party of Texas to emphasize the Party's new intention to become a force in state government;

WHEREAS James A. Leonard, in the dead of night moved the Party Headquarters from Houston to Austin;

WHEREAS James A. Leonard then immediately mobilized the Party's meager resources to support the candidacy of a 36-year-old Associate Professor of Government, John Tower, to fill Lyndon Johnson's vacant US Senate seat;

WHEREAS James A. Leonard was an architect of John Tower's breakthrough 1961 Senate victory to claim Lyndon Johnson's seat, and as chairman of Associated Republicans of Texas was guiding hand behind the GOP's once-quixotic goal of taking control of the Texas Legislature;

WHEREAS James A. Leonard directed Jack Cox's strong, but losing campaign against John Connally for governor in 1962;

WHEREAS James A. Leonard directed future President George H.W. Bush's first unsuccessful campaign for the U.S. Senate in 1964;



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WHEREAS James A. Leonard was an innovative political organizer and thinker in terms of both grassroots organizing and the use of computer technology;

WHEREAS James A. Leonard built an oil business and had cattle interests and never, as far as all known, made any money out of politics;

WHEREAS James A. Leonard was drawn to politics, and to the Republican Party in Texas by idealism and a desire to break away from the lockstep orthodoxy of the post-war Gray Flannel Suit generation;

WHEREAS James A. Leonard was crisp, clever and efficient, and stayed out of the headlines;

WHEREAS James A. Leonard never tried to make a name for himself, was very self-effacing and never wanted or sought his own publicity;

WHEREAS James A. Leonard pursued his once farfetched dream of a Republican Texas that honored individual liberty and respected individual enterprise;

WHEREAS James A. Leonard was one of the founding fathers of the modern Texas Republican Party, and as a strategist Leonard helped mold GOP in Texas;

WHEREAS James A. Leonard's most audacious campaign was the decades-long effort to turn the Texas Legislature red, which he saw through to fruition with Republicans gaining control of the Texas Senate in 1996 and the Texas House in 2002;

WHEREAS James A. Leonard leaves his wife of 44 years, Jackie Leonard, two daughters, three sons, and two grandchildren;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Republican Party of Texas recognizes and immeasurably thanks James A. Leonard for his lifetime of accomplishment & his personal contribution of selflessly giving to others to help make the great State of Texas what it is today; and that

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Republican Party of Texas recommends other statewide organizations across Texas initiate similar resolutions recognizing James A. Leonard's love of individual liberty and respect of individual enterprise, thanking him for his lifetime of accomplishment and selfless contribution to help make the great State of Texas what it is today.

Passed by the State Republican Executive Committee on September 29, 2013