

By Senator Wise

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Senate Resolution No. ____

A resolution recognizing former Congressman Charles Edward Bennett, who died on September 6, 2003, for outstanding public service.

WHEREAS, United States Representative Charles E. Bennett was Florida's longest serving congressman, was first elected to Congress in 1948, and represented the people of the Jacksonville area until 1993, serving more than 44 years under nine presidents, and

WHEREAS, in 1941 Charles Edward Bennett enlisted in the United States Army where he served with distinction until his discharge as a Captain in 1947 after receiving the Silver Star, the Bronze Star, the Combat Infantryman Badge, the Philippine Legion of Honor and Gold Cross, and the French Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur for gallantry in action for wartime service as a leader of Philippine Scouts, and

WHEREAS, Congressman Charles E. Bennett served as Dean and Chairman of Florida's Congressional Delegation and supported many initiatives that benefited the State of Florida and its residents, and

WHEREAS, known as an early advocate for ethical reform in Congress, Representative Bennett sponsored legislation creating the House Ethics Committee and he served as its first chairman, and

WHEREAS, during his tenure in Congress, Charles E. Bennett was the second-ranking Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee, served as Chairman of the Seapower and Strategic Materials Subcommittee, and championed legislation to provide ships for the United States Navy, increase military

1 pay, improve military housing, and reform military justice,
2 and,

3 WHEREAS, in 1954 Congressman Bennett sponsored the bill
4 that added the words "In God We Trust" to the nation's coins
5 and currency, and

6 WHEREAS, a cosponsor of the Americans With Disabilities
7 Act, Congressman Bennett was himself disabled and used a
8 wheelchair or cane after contracting polio during World War II
9 when he was a guerrilla fighter in the Philippines, and

10 WHEREAS, in addition to his legislative service,
11 Congressman Bennett authored numerous books on Florida history
12 which collectively added to the understanding and appreciation
13 of the early history of this state and he was instrumental in
14 creating the Fort Caroline National Memorial and the Timucuan
15 Ecological and Historical Preserve, and

16 WHEREAS, Charles Edward Bennett was a patriot who will
17 long be remembered for his principled representation of his
18 constituents, his impeccable voting record, his uncompromising
19 ethics and advocacy for ethical reforms in Congress, and his
20 leadership in helping to ensure a strong national defense as
21 the cornerstone of national security, NOW, THEREFORE,

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23 Be It Resolved by the Senate of the State of Florida:

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25 That the Florida Senate recognizes and honors former
26 Congressman Charles Edward Bennett for outstanding service to
27 the people of this state and the United States.

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution,
29 with the Seal of the Senate affixed, be presented to Dorothy
30 Jean Bennett of Jacksonville, the widow of Congressman Charles
31 E. Bennett.