

HR 9151

2004

1 House Resolution

2 A resolution honoring the memory of former State
3 Representative Tom Lewis.

4
5 WHEREAS, Tom Lewis was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania,
6 on October 26, 1924, and served honorably in the United States
7 Air Force for 11 years as a Gunner on a B-25 bomber in World War
8 II and in Korea, and

9 WHEREAS, Tom Lewis completed his service in the Air Force
10 at Morrison Field, now known as the site of the Palm Beach
11 International Airport, and, having grown attached to the
12 community, Tom and his wife, Marian, decided to stay and raise
13 their family, which, at the time of his death, included three
14 children, seven grandchildren, and one great-grandchild, and

15 WHEREAS, Tom Lewis began working for Pratt & Whitney
16 Aircraft in North Palm Beach, rising to the position of Project
17 Manager of Pratt's jet and rocket engine testing program in his
18 17 years with the company, and

19 WHEREAS, Tom Lewis, at the behest of his friends and
20 neighbors, began his 30-year political career as a councilman
21 and Mayor in the Village of North Palm Beach from 1964 through
22 1972, and

23 WHEREAS, Tom Lewis won election to the District 83 seat in
24 the House of Representatives, a district he represented from
25 1972 through 1980, and during his tenure served as the Chair of
26 the Palm Beach County Legislative Delegation in 1976 and 1979
27 and served as Minority Whip from 1978 to 1980, and

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28 WHEREAS, Tom Lewis won election to the District 27 seat of the
 29 Senate, a seat he held from 1980 to 1982, during which time he
 30 served on the Agriculture and Appropriations Committees, and

31 WHEREAS, Tom Lewis was elected to the United States
 32 Congress in 1982 and immediately put his years of military,
 33 private, and public-sector experience to work as a member of the
 34 Science and Technology Committee and the Agriculture Committee,
 35 where he represented Florida's farmers, growers, and cattlemen
 36 with vigor and determination, and

37 WHEREAS, of the hundreds of legislative initiatives and
 38 policy issues on which Tom Lewis worked so earnestly for the
 39 people of Florida, he will be fondly remembered for several that
 40 still affect the lives of Floridians, including leading the
 41 successful effort to have the Department of Veterans' Affairs
 42 construct and open a new, state-of-the-art medical center in
 43 West Palm Beach in 1994, which currently serves the health care
 44 needs of 70,000 veterans, and

45 WHEREAS, Tom Lewis, along with then-United States Senator
 46 Lawton Chiles, passed legislation that added nearly 160,000
 47 acres to the Big Cypress National Preserve in Collier County,
 48 and

49 WHEREAS, Florida's growers and cattlemen found a staunch
 50 ally in Tom Lewis when he fought against President Clinton's
 51 North American Free Trade Agreement until the President agreed
 52 to certain protections for local agriculture, as well as helping
 53 to break down the barriers to Florida's beef and citrus trade
 54 with Japan, and

55 WHEREAS, Tom Lewis brought a USDA federal research lab to
 56 St. Lucie County, which now provides more than 100 jobs and the

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57 enhancement of educational opportunities throughout the Treasure
58 Coast, and

59 WHEREAS, Tom Lewis fought for funding for restoration of
60 Florida's most sensitive lands, including the Indian River
61 Lagoon, the Lake Worth Lagoon, and the Kissimmee River, and,
62 with the help of Senator Bob Graham, led the effort to oppose
63 drilling off Florida's coasts, and

64 WHEREAS, one of Tom Lewis' most important legislative
65 efforts will always be remembered by an appreciative state
66 during each hurricane season because of his long fight to ensure
67 that the Air Force Reserve continue to fly the WC-130 "Hurricane
68 Hunter" aircraft into tropical storms and hurricanes, gathering
69 crucial data for meteorologists who can more accurately predict
70 the path and severity of oncoming storms, NOW, THEREFORE,

71
72 Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of
73 Florida:

74
75 That the House of Representatives respectfully honors the
76 memory and legacy of Mayor, Florida State Representative,
77 Florida State Senator, and United States Congressman Tom Lewis,
78 a dedicated man of family first, a tireless advocate for his
79 constituents, a statesman, and a mentor and friend to many.

80 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be
81 presented to the family of Tom Lewis as a tangible token of the
82 sentiments expressed herein.