

SHORT TITLE: Commending the life and career of the late Governor
Raymond Gary; distribution.

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2nd Session of the 44th Legislature (1994)

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 024

By: Mickle and Roberts

AS INTRODUCED

A Resolution praising the life and career of the late Governor Raymond Gary; extending sincere and heartfelt condolences to his family and many friends; making a permanent record; and directing distribution.

WHEREAS, Raymond Dancel Gary was born to Dancel R. and Winnie Roman Gary on a farm between Madill and Kingston, Oklahoma, on January 21, 1908. Educated in local schools, he attended Southeastern State College. He married his high school sweetheart, Emma Mae Purser, on September 1, 1928; and

WHEREAS, Raymond Gary began his career of public service as a teacher at Rocky Point School. He served five years as a teacher before being elected as Marshall County Superintendent of Schools in 1932, a position he held for four years; and

WHEREAS, Raymond Gary began his business career in 1936 in the school and office supply business. He was proprietor of Gary Furniture Manufacturing Company from 1936 to 1941. In 1945 Raymond Gary formed what was to become the Sooner Oil Company and starting in 1946 served as its President. Later, he was to serve as Chairman of the Board of Madill's First National Bank and Kingston's Texoma Bank; and

WHEREAS, Raymond Gary was elected to the Oklahoma State Senate in 1941, representing Johnston and Marshall Counties in Senate District 26. During his first session he served as Chairman of the Flood Control and Drainage Committee and Vice Chairman of the Livestock and Tenant Farming Committee and Public Safety Committee.

In 1943, he served as Vice Chairman of the Agriculture Committee and Chairman of the Erosion, Flood Control and Drainage Committee. The year 1945 saw Raymond Gary designated as Assistant Floor Leader and serving as Vice Chairman of the Education Committee, plus Chairman of the Flood Control and Drainage Committee. In 1947, Senator Gary was representing Love and Marshall Counties and serving as Chairman of the Appropriations Committee plus Vice Chairman of the Manufacturing, Industry, Parks, Recreation, Resources and Planning Committee. He served again as Chairman of the Appropriations Committee in 1949 as well as Chairman of the Committee on Rules and Committees. He continued as Chairman of the Appropriations Committee in 1951. Senator Raymond Gary was elected President Pro Tempore of the Oklahoma State Senate for the Twenty-fourth Legislature (1953). During his 14-year tenure in the Oklahoma State Senate, he was remembered as the legislator who formulated the state's balanced budget laws and who pioneered the state's free textbook policy for public school students; and

WHEREAS, Raymond Gary was inaugurated January 10, 1955 as the State of Oklahoma's fifteenth Governor, only one of two Oklahoma Governors ever to go from the State Senate to the Governor's mansion. During his Administration, the power of the Governor's office was centralized, thanks to his experience in and close ties with the State Senate. Raymond Gary was known as a "Legislator's Governor"; and

WHEREAS, one of the first actions of Governor Gary was to order the "whites only" and "colored only" signs taken down from restrooms at the State Capitol. His administration began after the United States Supreme Court ordered that public schools be integrated. Governor Gary led the State of Oklahoma through the initial integration era and integrated public schools without any of the violence, confrontations and complications that occurred in neighboring states. He proclaimed in public that the State of

Oklahoma would follow the law of the land despite opposition from many sources. Governor Gary led the movement to pass a constitutional amendment eliminating separate funding of black and white schools. His leadership was moral in nature; and

WHEREAS, Governor Gary was known as a great road builder. Under his administration, the State of Oklahoma gained 3,500 more miles of highways, 903 more bridges, saw the completion of the Skelly Drive Expressway (Interstate 44, in Tulsa, Oklahoma) and began construction of Interstate 35 north of Oklahoma City, while supporting the extension of Interstate 40 to the west of Oklahoma City. Some 800 miles of new interstate system was planned during his administration; and

WHEREAS, Governor Gary came from a rural background and was well known for his support of rural Oklahoma and its small towns. His speech and manner were from rural Oklahoma and his white cowboy hat was a familiar symbol of his administration; and

WHEREAS, Governor Gary established the Department of Commerce and Industry and supported a statewide water plan that resulted in the Oklahoma Water Resources Board. He also was a major promoter of Oklahoma's tourism industry; and

WHEREAS, after leaving the Governor's office, Raymond Gary's business grew into multimillion dollar operations including the Sooner Express, the Sooner Leasing and Rental Company and the Gary Cattle Company. He also served as a Director of the Kansas City Southern Railroad and the Louisiana and Arkansas Railroad. Gary resided on his Aberdeen Angus cattle ranch; and

WHEREAS, in 1970, Raymond Gary was inducted into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame. In 1976, he received Oklahoma State University's Henry G. Bennett Distinguished Service Award. A devout Baptist, Gary and his wife were members of the First Baptist Church in Kingston, Oklahoma, and in 1976 the Gary family donated 37 acres and \$200,000.00 for construction of the Baptist Children's Home. He

served as a trustee of Oklahoma Baptist University and was active in Rotary, Lions and the Boy Scouts of America; and

WHEREAS, Raymond Dancel Gary, the first Governor of Oklahoma born in the State of Oklahoma, at the age of 85 years old, died on Saturday, December 11, 1993, at 2:06 p.m. at Marshall Memorial Hospital in Madill, Oklahoma, of congestive heart failure after a lengthy illness.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE 2ND SESSION OF THE 44TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE:

THAT the Oklahoma State Senate praises the life and career of the late Governor Raymond Gary.

THAT the Oklahoma State Senate extends sincere and heartfelt condolences to his family and many friends on behalf of the State Senate and the citizens of this state.

THAT a copy of this resolution be spread upon the pages of the Journal of the Oklahoma State Senate as a permanent record of the praise and condolences expressed herein.

THAT duly authenticated copies of this resolution be distributed to his son, Raymond J. Gary of Denison, Texas; daughter Mona Mae Waymire of Madill, Oklahoma; brother Joe F. Gary of Durant, Oklahoma; sister Ruby Kemp of Yuba City, California; and sister Mary Jane Coe of Odessa, Texas.

44-2-2130

THC