

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 157

The Speaker, on behalf of the entire membership of the House of Representatives, offered the following resolution:

1 A resolution of tribute offered as a memorial for Thomas Leo
2 Brown, former Ingham County Judge and member of the House of
3 Representatives.

4 Whereas, It is with great sorrow that the members of the House
5 of Representatives learned about the passing of Thomas Leo Brown.
6 He will be remembered as a dedicated, lifelong public servant not
7 only by his constituents in the city of Lansing and Ingham County
8 at large, but by the people of the State of Michigan; and

9 Whereas, In 1931, Thomas Leo Brown was born to Leo and Maurine
10 Brown in Hillsdale, Michigan. Alongside his siblings, he was raised
11 on a farm in Leslie, Michigan. After graduating from Leslie High
12 School in 1949, he honorably served in the United States Navy until
13 1952. Thomas continued his education in Michigan following Navy

1 service, attending Jackson Junior College then graduating from
2 Michigan State University in 1957. He began his legal career at the
3 University of Detroit Law School, where he graduated in 1961 as a
4 member of the first night school class. He then worked as an
5 assistant prosecutor in Ingham County before transitioning into
6 private practice at the Weed, Hildebrandt, and King Law Firm; and

7 Whereas, Thomas Leo Brown left private legal practice in 1966
8 when he was elected to the Fifty-seventh House District seat,
9 representing the people of Lansing for two consecutive terms.

10 During his tenure in this chamber, his extensive legal experience
11 was invaluable during his service as the Vice Chair of the
12 Judiciary Committee and as a member of the Conservation &
13 Recreation, Education, Retirement, and Urban Affairs committees;
14 and

15 Whereas, Thomas Leo Brown's time in the Legislature was only
16 the beginning of his long and storied career in public service. In
17 1971, he was appointed by Governor William Milliken to serve as
18 Probate and Juvenile Judge, an office he held until 1974 when he
19 was elected as Circuit Court Judge for the Thirtieth Circuit Court
20 in Ingham County. Judge Brown loved his job as a jurist, serving
21 for over thirty years until retiring due to age limits in 2004. He
22 presided over countless civil and criminal cases during his time on
23 the bench, opining on a wide array of legal issues. He was
24 respected not only by the citizens of Ingham County, but by his
25 fellow judges as well, holding the position of President of the
26 Michigan Judges Association in 1990 as well as Secretary of the
27 State Bar of Michigan's Judicial Conference; and

28 Whereas, Thomas Leo Brown's commitment to serving others was
29 evident not only in his work as judge but in his dedication to

1 family. "Father Tom", as he was known, relished spending quality
2 time with his children, teaching each of them to swim, ride bikes,
3 play cards, drive a stick shift, and troll for walleye with a red
4 and white flatfish. He never missed an opportunity to take the
5 family on Coleman tent adventures in state, national, and Canadian
6 parks. Thomas Leo Brown's judicial wisdom was also directly applied
7 to family matters, as he was a great teacher of virtues and never
8 missed the opportunity to teach his children that there was a
9 "right time to do the right thing," imparting many lessons through
10 his "moral of the story" bedtime fables; and

11 Whereas Thomas Leo Brown is survived by his second wife, six
12 children, José, Suzanne, Catherine, Ramón, María, and Tomás,
13 stepdaughter Stacey, eighteen grandchildren, five great-
14 grandchildren, as well as a brother and step-grandchildren. He was
15 preceded in death by his first wife, María Mercedes "Mercha"; and

16 Whereas, Upon Thomas Leo Brown's passing, we offer our
17 condolences to his loved ones. His contributions to this chamber
18 and the State of Michigan will be remembered; now, therefore be it

19 Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we offer this
20 expression of our highest tribute to honor the memory of Thomas Leo
21 Brown, a member of the House of Representatives from 1967 to 1970;
22 and be it further

23 Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the
24 Brown family as evidence of our lasting esteem for his memory.