

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

House Resolution No. 241.

A resolution of tribute offered as a memorial for Robert D. Mahoney, former member of the House of Representatives.

Whereas, The members of this legislative body were saddened to learn of the passing of former Representative Robert Mahoney. He was both a statesman and a self-starter, and his noteworthy contributions for the disabled and all residents of this state will be long remembered; and

Whereas, Born in Duluth, Minnesota, Robert Mahoney attended Detroit's Northern High School. He and his wife, Jennie, settled in Detroit after they married to raise a family of ten children. Blind since the age of fifteen, he worked as a door-to-door salesman for twelve years to support his growing family. Advised to find a new profession due to health issues and at the urging of a friend, he successfully ran for Democratic precinct delegate. The Mahoneys also established the still-operating Michigan Notary Business, selling notary supplies by mail; and

Whereas, In 1954, Robert Mahoney was elected to represent northeast Detroit in the Michigan House of Representatives. A lifelong Catholic, Representative Mahoney strongly believed that God opened a new window with his venture into politics. As Michigan's first blind legislator, Representative Mahoney introduced legislation requiring hunter safety classes for young hunters, successfully purchasing a hunting license himself to show the need for stricter regulations. Representative Mahoney also sponsored legislation to provide state identification for blind people who did not hold a driver's license and to require that vending stands in state-owned buildings be run a by blind proprietors. He secured funding for WKAR radio to offer a sub-channel for the "Talking Book" program to serve the blind. During his tenure, Representative Mahoney chaired several committees including Aid to the Handicapped, Social Aid and Welfare, Social Services and Corrections, and House Policy. He was also a member of the Supplies and Expenditures, Education, Insurance, Public Safety, and Taxation committees; and

Whereas, After leaving the Legislature in 1972, Representative Mahoney was appointed as a Wayne County Commissioner where he served for three years and later he lobbied for the Michigan Hospital Association. He noted that computers made life easier for the blind and, using a special Braille computer, he would surf the web, read news, and send e-mails. In 1995, he self-published a book about his life titled "Living Out of Sight"; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we offer this expression of our highest tribute to honor the memory of Robert D. Mahoney, a member of this legislative body from 1955 to 1972; and be it further

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