

House Resolution 1151

By: Representatives Park of the 101st, Drenner of the 85th, Cannon of the 58th, Shannon of the 84th, Wilson of the 80th, and others

A RESOLUTION

- 1 Honoring the life and memory of Richard Rhodes; and for other purposes.
- 2 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia mourns the loss and celebrates the life of one of its most
3 beloved citizens with the passing of Richard Rhodes on July 21, 2019; and
- 4 WHEREAS, Richard Rhodes was born on August 14, 1937, in Tampa, Florida. He served
5 honorably in the United States Navy in the late 1950s aboard the USS Lexington and made
6 Atlanta his home in 1971; and
- 7 WHEREAS, Richard Rhodes is survived by his cousin Pam Auchmutey and leaves behind
8 his close friends and extended family members, Larry Mock, Jon Greaves, and David
9 Neubecker; and
- 10 WHEREAS, Richard Rhodes was a pioneer, survivor, and champion for LGBTQ Georgians;
11 and
- 12 WHEREAS, Richard Rhodes broke barriers as one of the first openly gay men to run for the
13 Georgia House of Representatives in 1988, served as the first openly gay male delegate from
14 Georgia during the 1988 and 1992 Democratic National Conventions, and became the first
15 openly gay chair of the DeKalb Democratic Party in 1993; and
- 16 WHEREAS, Richard Rhodes survived the persecution of the Johns Commission in Florida
17 during the 1960s and, when he was diagnosed with HIV at the age of 65, shared his
18 experiences living with HIV for more than 15 years to educate others, stating "HIV hasn't
19 limited me in any way. I live life to its fullest."; and
- 20 WHEREAS, throughout his life, Richard Rhodes fought for the equal dignity and liberty of
21 the LGBTQ community; he received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Atlanta Gay
22 and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce; he was a founding member of SAGE (Services and

23 Advocacy for LGBT Elders) and the Atlanta Prime Timers; co-founded the LGBTQ
24 Archives and Special Collections Committee; and at the age of 81, advocated for LGBTQ
25 civil rights protections in the City of Brookhaven; and

26 WHEREAS, a man who inspired those around him, Richard Rhodes was an active and
27 beloved member of his church, the Spiritual Living Center of Atlanta; and

28 WHEREAS, Richard Rhodes was a pillar of the community with an unimpeachable
29 reputation for kindness, intelligence, and good will, and, by the example he made of his life,
30 he made this world a better place in which to live; and

31 WHEREAS, Richard Rhodes was the embodiment of love, grace, and hope, and his life was
32 a reflection of these qualities; and

33 WHEREAS, a caring and generous man, Richard Rhodes will long be remembered for his
34 fearless leadership, optimism, and indomitable spirit and will be missed by all who had the
35 great fortune of knowing him.

36 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
37 the members of this body join in honoring the life and memory of Richard Rhodes and
38 express their deepest and most sincere regret at his passing.

39 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
40 and directed to make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to the
41 family of Richard Rhodes.