

House Engrossed

Joe Hart; death resolution

State of Arizona
House of Representatives
Fifty-sixth Legislature
First Regular Session
2023

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 2048

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

ON THE DEATH OF JOE HART.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 The Honorable Joe Hart passed away due to complications from kidney
2 disease at the age of 78 on September 11, 2022 in Cedar City, Utah.

3 Born on May 8, 1944 in Kingman, Arizona, Joe was a fourth-generation
4 Arizonan and a lifelong resident of Mohave County. He was the seventh
5 child of Kenneth Hart and Helen McDermott and spent his childhood days
6 riding his horse around Kingman and sitting at his mother's diner "The
7 Chocolate Shop," which was located on Fourth Street. His parents taught
8 him the value of a hard day's work, and that work ethic served him well as
9 he followed in his family's legacy of working in the mining business.

10 Joe eloped with Rhonda Kay Reeves on September 4, 1967 in Las Vegas,
11 Nevada, and their marriage was eventually sealed in 1972 in the
12 St. George, Utah Temple. Together they raised four daughters who were
13 affectionately known as the "Hart Girls."

14 Joe worked at the Duval Mine for 20 years as a safety foreman and
15 considered his crew like a second family. Beginning in the 1970s, he
16 began to spend his weekends and evenings ranching with his mentor, Flay
17 Peterson. When Flay retired in 1979, Joe and Rhonda bought his business,
18 the Black Mountain Cattle Company. Riding horses and ranching continued to
19 be passions he held for the rest of his life.

20 In 1984, Joe and Rhonda bought their first radio station in Kingman,
21 eventually adding two more radio and two television stations to their
22 broadcasting company, and through these businesses they were able to
23 connect to and serve their community. Joe's love of country music and
24 natural ability to speak with people led him to interview some of the
25 genre's greatest stars, including Johnny Cash, Merle Haggard and Reba
26 McEntire.

27 Joe was elected in 1992 to the Arizona House of Representatives
28 where he served for ten years. He was selected as Speaker Pro Tempore and
29 served as chairman on several committees, including Public Institutions,
30 the Environment and Government Operations. His time spent in the
31 Legislature involved some of his most cherished memories, and he counted
32 many of the members as his closest friends. He was passionate about
33 western states' issues such as protection of property and water rights,
34 agriculture, mining and transportation. Joe served on the Interstate 11
35 Commission and helped to designate Highway 93 as part of the NAFTA trade
36 corridor.

37 With a well-timed appearance at the Capitol of his ever-popular
38 cattle roping machine, Lightning, Joe was particularly popular when the
39 end of a regular legislative session approached. As exhaustion grew and
40 patience diminished, Joe's endearing affability encouraged legislators,
41 staff, lobbyists and the governor to try their hand with the cowboy's
42 lasso as conference committees, engrossing of bills and final negotiations
43 concluded. This special sine die tradition did more than signal the end
44 of the legislative session, it also disarmed contention, renewed the

1 pioneering Arizona spirit, energized lawmakers to rally and embodied the
2 love for one another that Joe dedicated his entire life to honor and
3 maintain.

4 With his experienced career in the mining industry, it was only
5 natural that Joe ran for Arizona State Mine Inspector, as Arizona is the
6 only state that has an elected mine inspector position. He won his first
7 election in 2006 and all his subsequent elections, serving as the first
8 statewide elected official from Mohave County and as the eleventh Arizona
9 State Mine Inspector, until his retirement in 2021. Joe's top priority
10 was to make the State of Arizona safe for its residents to live, work and
11 recreate, which led to his tireless effort to identify, fence and close
12 abandoned mines.

13 Joe will be missed by his wife of 55 years, Rhonda, and his four
14 daughters, Cari Jo, Trish, Jodi and Amy, his 11 grandchildren and his five
15 great-grandchildren. He called all of them his "pride and joy" and
16 considered himself the luckiest man in the world. Joe had many titles in
17 his life, including miner, rancher, businessman, patriot, statesman and
18 friend, but the ones he cherished the most were Sweetheart, Dad and Papa.

19 As this cowboy rides away, he will be remembered as a man of faith
20 who dedicated his life to service to his family, friends, community, state
21 and country. Thank you, Joe, for sharing your goodness with us.

22 Good ride, cowboy.

23 Therefore

24 Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of Arizona,
25 the Senate concurring:

26 That the Members of the Legislature sincerely regret the passing of
27 Joe Hart and extend their most sincere sympathies and condolences to his
28 surviving family and friends.