



2025 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 69

June 12, 2025 - Introduced by Senators SMITH, CARPENTER, RATCLIFF, HESSELBEIN, WIRCH, SPREITZER and JAMES, cosponsored by Representatives EMERSON, SINICKI, PHELPS, STROUD, MURPHY, PALMERI and ROE. Referred to Committee on Senate Organization.

1 **Relating to:** honoring the life and public service of Representative Terrence A.
2 “Terry” Willkom.

3 Whereas, Representative Terry Willkom, a dedicated public servant, business
4 executive, and father, passed away in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, on May 16, 2025, at
5 the age of 82; and

6 Whereas, Terry Willkom was born on February 23, 1943, in Boyd, Wisconsin,
7 the son of Oswald and Leone Willkom and brother of Larry and Lynn; and

8 Whereas, Terry Willkom graduated from McDonell High School in Chippewa
9 Falls in 1960 and went on to receive a degree in business administration with a
10 minor in chemistry from the University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire in 1966; and

11 Whereas, Terry Willkom was elected to the Wisconsin Assembly and served
12 from 1971 to 1976 and at the age of 32 was one of the youngest members ever
13 elected as majority leader, serving in the role from 1975 to 1976, all while sporting
14 his trademark cowboy boots that he started wearing at the age of five; and

1 Whereas, Terry Willkom was actively involved in several legislative
2 committees, including the Assembly Committees on Excise and Fees, Highways,
3 Natural Resources, and Organization; the Joint Committees on Employee
4 Relations, Finance, Interim, and Legislative Council; and as vice chair of the
5 Assembly Committees on Rules, Taxation, and Third Reading and the Joint
6 Committee on Legislative Organization, and was on the Council on Criminal
7 Justice, the Interstate Cooperation Commission, and the Legislative Council
8 Special Committee on Liability of Health Professionals; and

9 Whereas, Terry Willkom, in 1975, highlighted that the most challenging
10 aspect of being a legislator was managing an ever-increasing workload while also
11 struggling with time away from his young family, becoming the first known
12 legislator in Wisconsin history to move his family to Madison during the school
13 week, with the family returning to his district on the weekends; and

14 Whereas, Terry Willkom, in addition to his career in the assembly, held many
15 positions throughout his life, including as a pinsetter at Boney's Bowling Alley in
16 Boyd for 10 cents an hour in his youth, a researcher at 3M in Minneapolis in 1963,
17 a business manager at St. Joseph's Hospital in Chippewa Falls in 1968, the deputy
18 secretary of health and social services from 1977 to 1981, the director of the
19 Northern Center for the Developmentally Disabled from 1984 to 1989, the vice
20 president of the Chippewa Falls Area Unified School Board from 1989 to 1990, the
21 acting president of Rex Systems from 1989 to 1990, the president and COO of Cray
22 Computer in Colorado Springs, Colorado, in 1990, and the director of the Wisconsin
23 Innovation Network in 2001; and

24 Whereas, Terry Willkom enjoyed tennis, fishing, ice fishing, hunting,

1 genealogy, raising and showing Irish Setters, and equestrian activities with his
2 treasured horse, Cinco; and

3 Whereas, Terry Willkom was a loving husband to Sharon for nine years and to
4 his second wife, Susan, for 43 years. He was a devoted father to his children, Mary
5 Catherine, Michelle, and Allen, and to his stepchildren, Jill and Jay. He was also a
6 proud grandfather to Christopher and Lu and to his step-grandchildren, Flint,
7 Jack, and Annabelle, and was an adoring godfather to Molly; and

8 Whereas, Terry Willkom will be remembered for honesty, integrity, and ability
9 to work with both sides of the aisle; now, therefore, be it

10 ***Resolved by the senate, the assembly concurring, That*** the members of
11 the Wisconsin Legislature honor the life and public service of Representative
12 Terrence A. “Terry” Willkom and extend their condolences to his family and
13 friends.

14 (END)