



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY  
Faculty Senate

To: Dr. Duane Nellis, Texas Tech University President  
From: Dr. Michael Farmer, Faculty Senate President  
Date: January 6, 2015  
RE: Timothy Cole Resolution

Introduced to, and passed by, the Texas Tech Faculty Senate on the 14<sup>th</sup> of January 2015.

### **TIMOTHY COLE RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS** Mr. Timothy Cole, a student who had been enrolled in Texas Tech University, was wrongfully convicted of rape and served 13 years in prison before he died;

**WHEREAS** Mr. Cole exemplifies the lines from the TTU fight song, "Strive for honor evermore" because he refused to plead guilty to a crime he did not commit to become eligible for consideration for parole;

**WHEREAS** Timothy Cole's progress toward a degree from Texas Tech University was ended by his wrongful conviction;

**WHEREAS** Mr. Cole's tragic history led to the passage of the Timothy Cole Act in the Texas legislature, which provides for financial compensation, personal and family counseling, and waiver of college tuition for prisoners who have been exonerated of the crimes for which they were convicted;

**WHEREAS** Mr. Cole never lost faith in the justice system nor exhibited open resentment at his wrongful conviction and incarceration,

**WHEREAS** even from prison Mr. Cole encouraged his family members to pursue their education at Texas Tech University, and

**WHEREAS** Timothy Cole's life presents an example for Texas Tech University students of honor and courage in the face of insurmountable odds;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Texas Tech University Faculty Senate calls upon the university administration to recognize Mr. Cole's impact on the university, Lubbock community, and the State of Texas by awarding him a posthumous degree of Doctor of Law and Social Justice *honoris causa* at the May 2015 commencement in recognition of his adherence to principle in the face of overwhelming adversity.



## TIMORHY COLE NARRATIVE

The Texas Tech University Faculty Senate at its meeting of January 14, 2015 voted to nominate Mr. Timothy Cole to receive a posthumous degree of Doctor of Law and Social Justice *honoris causa* from Texas Tech University at the May 2015 university commencement. This nomination is based on Mr. Cole's highly principled response to having been wrongly convicted of rape and sentenced to prison while he was a Texas Tech University student. Mr. Cole died in prison during an asthma attack, having declined to confess to a crime he did not commit in order to be eligible for parole. Subsequent to his death, another person confessed to having committed the crime for which Mr. Cole was convicted. This case led the Texas Legislature to pass the Timothy Cole Act, which provides financial compensation, personal and family counseling, and waiver of college tuition for prisoners who, like Mr. Cole, have been wrongfully convicted of a crime and sentenced to prison. However, more important is the example Mr. Cole provided of courage and honor under the most difficult of circumstances. Nor did Mr. Cole lose faith in the justice system or exhibit rancor; rather, he stated "I still believe in the justice system, it just does not believe in me." Moreover, from prison Mr. Cole urged his family members to pursue their education at Texas Tech University.

The awarding of a posthumous degree Doctor of Law and Social Justice, *honoris causa* to Mr. Cole, who in all probability would have graduated had it not been for his unfortunate circumstances, will draw attention to his affiliation with Texas Tech University as a former student who remained loyal to the university and who lived by the words of the TTU fight song "Strive for honor evermore."