

JACK BROOKS

Former Congressman Jack Brooks has had a close personal and professional relationship with Lamar University. He enrolled in Lamar Jr. College in 1939, majored in journalism, and completed his first two years of college at Lamar in June 1941. After serving as a Marine on Guadalcanal, Guam, Okinawa, and North China, Jack Brooks was elected to the Texas House of Representatives in 1946 where he authored the bill making Lamar a four-year institution.

Congressman Brooks was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1952, where he served for 42 consecutive years. He represented the 2nd District of Texas from 1953 through 1966 and the 9th District from 1967 through 1994. Brooks served as chairman of the House Government Operations Committee, the Select Committee on Congressional Operations, the Joint Committee on Congressional Operations, and the Subcommittee on Legislation and National Security. In 1979, Congressman Brooks became the Dean of the Texas Delegation, the member with the longest tenure in the Congress.

After his retirement, Congressman Brooks has continued to receive prestigious awards. On April 23, 2001, NASA Administrator Daniel Goldin presented the agency's highest honor, the Distinguished Service Medal to Brooks at a ceremony in the John Grey Center of Lamar University. Goldin cited Brooks' long-standing support of the U.S. space program and praised his role in "strengthening the agency during its formative years". Goldin, who served as NASA administrator from 1992 until 2002, added "Congressman Brooks took it upon himself to personally deliver support to one of the agency's key programs: the design, development, and on-orbit assembly of the International Space Station". In August 2002, Congressman Nick Lampson and a host of distinguished guests honored Brooks with an evening celebration entitled "Tribute to a Legend: A Celebration of the Life and Legacy of U.S. Congressman Jack Brooks". In November 2002, Government Computer News announced former Congressman Brooks had been selected as the Post Newsweek Tech Media's civilian executive of the last twenty years. The News cited the 1965 Brooks Act that opened up the government information technology market for competitive contracts.