

By: Davis

H.R. No. 726

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, The belief in justice for all is foundational to our  
2 democracy, yet more than 400 years after Africans were first  
3 brought to these shores in chains, Black Americans continue to  
4 struggle for full protection under the law and recognition as full  
5 human beings; and

6           WHEREAS, For nearly 250 years, Black Americans were enslaved;  
7 the passage of the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1868  
8 granted citizenship and equal protection under the law to all, but  
9 oppression persisted under Jim Crow laws; in the 1890s, journalist  
10 and civil rights activist Ida B. Wells decried the horrors of  
11 lynching and the failure of the nation "to put a stop to this  
12 wholesale slaughter"; almost 130 years after her call to action,  
13 Black men, women, and children are still denied the right to live  
14 safely and free from harm in their homes and communities, and the  
15 youngest African Americans are growing up as witnesses to a level of  
16 barbarous cruelty that Ida B. Wells would find all too familiar; and

17           WHEREAS, In contemporary America, the ease of video recording  
18 has allowed ordinary citizens to document incident after incident  
19 of horrific, often lethal violence against Black Americans; as a  
20 result, public awareness of this brutality has grown, but attempts  
21 to seek justice in these cases have exposed the deep, unhealed  
22 wounds of systemic racism and left many to ask if Black lives will  
23 ever matter in our state and in America; and

24           WHEREAS, The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed and exacerbated

1 long-standing and persistent inequities in health, education, and  
2 economic security, while continual hate-fueled actions underscore  
3 the destructive impact of systemic racism and bigotry; the culture  
4 that enables white nationalism and white supremacy foments violence  
5 not only against African Americans, but also other people of color  
6 and vulnerable communities; a rise in anti-Asian rhetoric, in  
7 particular, has caused racist extremists to increasingly target  
8 Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders; and

9       WHEREAS, The evils of oppression have taken a costly toll on  
10 our state and nation, and justice and liberty are but empty promises  
11 in a perpetual climate of hate and racial animus; although we  
12 cannot legislate away racism, we can help expose it to the light; we  
13 can adopt anti-racist policies and renew our commitment to end  
14 systemic racism, eliminate discrimination, and ensure fair and  
15 equitable treatment of people of color and members of other  
16 marginalized communities; and

17       WHEREAS, Silence and inaction allow racism, bigotry, and  
18 violence to fester at all levels of society, and by declaring that  
19 "Black Lives Matter," we reinforce our understanding that every  
20 American, no matter their race, religion, gender, language,  
21 national origin, or sexual orientation, deserves protection from  
22 inequities in health, education, and economic opportunity, and we  
23 reaffirm that the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of  
24 happiness belongs to each of us; now, therefore, be it

25       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 87th Texas  
26 Legislature hereby express its support for the efforts of the Black  
27 Lives Matter movement.