

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 70

WHEREAS, Austin College is kicking off the celebration of its 175th academic year during the fall 2023 semester; and

WHEREAS, The oldest college in Texas operating under its original charter and name, the school was established in Huntsville in 1849 by Dr. Daniel Baker, a Princeton-educated Presbyterian missionary; two presidents of the Republic of Texas, Sam Houston and Anson Jones, served on the original board of trustees; the institution was named after "the Father of Texas," Stephen F. Austin, and funded by a gift from his sister, Emily; and

WHEREAS, Records indicate that the first graduating class in 1854 was comprised of two students; the early years were full of challenges, with the Civil War, a rocky economy, and three yellow fever epidemics that swept through the city; as a result, Austin College moved to Sherman in 1876; it began to admit women in 1918, and in 1930, it merged with a women's school, Texas Presbyterian College; and

WHEREAS, Beginning in the postwar years, Austin College extensively reviewed the traditional liberal arts curriculum and explored innovations; in 1972, it adopted a comprehensive educational program that has continued to shape much of the academic development in the ensuing years; the next decade brought a new master plan, and iconic Sherman Hall underwent a \$1.37 million renovation; and

WHEREAS, The college celebrated its sesquicentennial in 1999 and signaled its ongoing commitment to progress through a \$120 million campaign; it experienced record enrollment as it continued its tradition of excellence; in 2009, the school welcomed its first female president, Dr. Marjorie Hass, and since 2017, it has been ably led by its 16th president, Steven P. O'Day; the current enrollment of 1,300 includes students from Texas and 13 other states, as well as Mexico, Germany, the United Kingdom, Thailand, and Vietnam; while maintaining its covenant relationship with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the campus offers a nonsectarian education that fosters understanding of the world's many religious, philosophical, and cultural traditions; and

WHEREAS, Throughout its history, this noteworthy institution has provided young scholars with a rich environment for personal and intellectual growth, preparing them to make a positive difference in Texas and the world beyond; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 88th Legislature, 3rd Called Session, hereby commemorate the 175th academic year of Austin College and extend to all those associated with this noteworthy institution sincere best wishes for the future; and, be it further

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RESOLVED, That an official copy of this Resolution be prepared for the college as an expression of high regard from the Texas Senate.

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President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on November 2, 2023.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate