

By: Murr

H.R. No. 102

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, Renowned Texas musician Robert Earl Keen brought 41  
2 years of touring to a triumphant close in 2022, bidding a fond and  
3 bittersweet farewell to cheering fans all across the country; and

4           WHEREAS, A Houston native, Mr. Keen first picked up a guitar  
5 during his freshman year at Texas A&M University; he began playing  
6 around town, and after graduation, he took a day job in Austin,  
7 honed his chops, and won the prestigious Kerrville Folk Festival  
8 New Folk Songwriting Competition; following a well-trodden path, he  
9 moved to Nashville and signed with a publishing company, but the  
10 scene proved stultifying for an artist who thrived on stage and  
11 wrote wry, folk-influenced songs with a novelist's keen eye for the  
12 telling detail; and

13           WHEREAS, Returning home to Texas proved to be the best  
14 possible career move; Mr. Keen came fully into his unique voice,  
15 populating his lyrics with colorful characters like the migrant  
16 gardener in "Mariano," the ne'er-do-well couple in "The Road Goes  
17 on Forever," and the dysfunctional inebriates of "Merry Christmas  
18 from the Family"; as he became one of the nation's top touring  
19 artists, a host of stars covered his tunes, from Joe Ely, Nanci  
20 Griffith, and George Strait to the Highwaymen, a supergroup of four  
21 legendary songsmiths, Johnny Cash, Kris Kristofferson, Waylon  
22 Jennings, and Willie Nelson; on the road and over more than 20  
23 albums, Mr. Keen's rootsy blend of country, folk, rock, and blues  
24 paved the way for numerous younger musicians who would benefit by

1 the growing popularity of a genre, dubbed *Americana*, that now has  
2 its own Grammy category; with a podcast titled *Americana*, he has  
3 helped raise the profile of many up-and-coming practitioners; he  
4 has supported even younger musicians with annual benefit concerts  
5 for the Hill Country Youth Orchestra; and

6 WHEREAS, Mr. Keen was named a Distinguished Alumnus of  
7 Texas A&M in 2018; his myriad accolades further include membership  
8 in the Texas Heritage Songwriters Association Hall of Fame, the  
9 Texas Cowboy Hall of Fame, and the Texas Institute of Letters; and

10 WHEREAS, Over Labor Day weekend 2022, Mr. Keen played his  
11 final, sold-out shows at John T. Floore's Country Store in Helotes,  
12 but although the road goes on without him, his creativity has always  
13 flourished here at home, and melancholy fans may find solace in  
14 anticipating the next additions to a magnificent body of work; now,  
15 therefore, be it

16 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 88th Texas  
17 Legislature hereby congratulate Robert Earl Keen on his retirement  
18 from touring and honor him for his outstanding contributions to  
19 Texas music; and, be it further

20 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
21 prepared for Mr. Keen as an expression of high regard by the Texas  
22 House of Representatives.