

1-1 By: Hopson, Cook of Navarro H.C.R. No. 34  
1-2 (Senate Sponsor - Staples)  
1-3 (In the Senate - Received from the House April 7, 2003;  
1-4 April 9, 2003, read first time and referred to Committee on State  
1-5 Affairs; May 19, 2003, reported favorably by the following vote:  
1-6 Yeas 6, Nays 0; May 19, 2003, sent to printer.)

1-7 HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1-8 WHEREAS, The State of Texas has customarily recognized a  
1-9 variety of official state symbols as tangible representations of  
1-10 the state's historical and cultural heritage; and

1-11 WHEREAS, The Texas State Railroad, an East Texas fixture for  
1-12 more than a century, had its origins in the iron-industry boom that  
1-13 East Texas experienced in the 1870s and 1880s; in 1875 the state  
1-14 legislature authorized construction of a new penitentiary near Rusk  
1-15 in order to develop the iron-ore resources of the area, as well as  
1-16 to relieve overcrowding at the penitentiary in Huntsville; the  
1-17 ensuing iron works at the East Texas Penitentiary provided material  
1-18 for the present State Capitol, including the iron that was used in  
1-19 the building's columns and dome; and

1-20 WHEREAS, To facilitate the transport of iron ore for the  
1-21 smelter and foundries, as well as timber for the prison's sawmill,  
1-22 construction was begun in 1881 on a line known officially as the  
1-23 Texas State Railroad, and by 1909 the road had been extended to  
1-24 Palestine in adjacent Anderson County; and

1-25 WHEREAS, In addition to hauling raw materials to the  
1-26 penitentiary, the railroad offered regular passenger and freight  
1-27 service from 1907 to 1921; prison inmates, who had constructed the  
1-28 entire line, made up the train crew, except for the engineer, during  
1-29 much of this period; and

1-30 WHEREAS, The iron works at the prison closed in 1913, and  
1-31 eight years later the state began leasing the track of the Texas  
1-32 State Railroad to private companies; over the next half-century the  
1-33 line served in particular to move lumber and timber products; and

1-34 WHEREAS, In 1972, after most of the road had remained unused  
1-35 for several years, the Texas Legislature conveyed the line to the  
1-36 Parks and Wildlife Department; at the urging of rail enthusiasts,  
1-37 and after studying the feasibility of such a project, it was decided  
1-38 to restore the line as part of a state historical park and to  
1-39 dedicate the complex to the preservation and interpretation of the  
1-40 country's railroad heritage; and

1-41 WHEREAS, On July 4, 1976, as part of the nation's  
1-42 Bicentennial celebration, the Texas State Railroad State  
1-43 Historical Park opened to the delight of countless citizens across  
1-44 the state; in 2002, more than 130,000 people visited the park,  
1-45 including 83,000 from outside the area; of those visitors, 41,110  
1-46 took a ride on one of the trains that makes the run through the piney  
1-47 woods and rolling hardwood creek bottoms between Palestine and  
1-48 Rusk; and

1-49 WHEREAS, A fully self-contained system, the Texas State  
1-50 Railroad operates four steam engines and four antique diesel  
1-51 locomotives; in addition, it maintains a complete steam-engine  
1-52 restoration shop, 29 miles of track, and 24 bridges, including one  
1-53 over the Neches River; and

1-54 WHEREAS, Included in the railroad's stock are Steam Engine  
1-55 No. 201, donated by the City of Abilene and once used by the Texas &  
1-56 Pacific Railroad; Steam Engine No. 300, donated by Temple  
1-57 Industries in Pineland; Steam Engine No. 400, purchased from the  
1-58 Magma Copper Mine in Magma, Arizona, and once used by the Tremont &  
1-59 Gulf Railway in Central Louisiana; Steam Engine No. 500, owned at  
1-60 one time by the City of San Angelo; and Steam Engine No. 610,  
1-61 operated by the Texas & Pacific between Shreveport and El Paso until  
1-62 1950 and displayed in Fort Worth for a number of years; in the 1970s  
1-63 the publisher and philanthropist Amon G. Carter, Jr., financed the  
1-64 restoration of No. 610, and the engine became one of two that pulled

2-1 the Freedom Train through Texas during the Bicentennial; and  
2-2 WHEREAS, Over the years, the railroad has received  
2-3 significant attention in many quarters and has been featured in  
2-4 television series, documentaries, commercials, music videos, and  
2-5 full-length films; and

2-6 WHEREAS, The Texas State Railroad and its historical park  
2-7 have contributed greatly to the prosperity of the surrounding area;  
2-8 in 2002 they injected nearly \$1.5 million into the local economy,  
2-9 generated more than \$4.6 million in sales, and produced a more than  
2-10 \$1.8 million impact on the income of local residents; and

2-11 WHEREAS, Deeply rooted in the life and industry of East  
2-12 Texas, the Texas State Railroad is today one of the largest steam  
2-13 train operations in the country; through its preservation program,  
2-14 its excursion tours, and a wide variety of educational efforts, the  
2-15 railroad constitutes an outstanding asset to the Lone Star State;  
2-16 now, therefore, be it

2-17 RESOLVED, That the 78th Legislature of the State of Texas  
2-18 hereby designate the Texas State Railroad as the official Railroad  
2-19 of Texas.

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