

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 55

**WHEREAS**, The Senate of the State of Texas takes pleasure in designating January 27, 2003, as Orange County Day at the State Capitol; and

**WHEREAS**, Bordered by the Sabine and Neches rivers in East Texas, Orange County was established in 1852 from a portion of Jefferson County; the county was named for the wild orange groves that graced the banks of the Sabine River during the days of the French and Spanish settlements; and

**WHEREAS**, The area grew steadily as a strategic link between the eastern and the western parts of this vast country; Orange, the county seat, served as a port for ships sailing the Sabine River with cotton as the prevalent cargo; lumber, cattle, and agriculture also were important in the growth and development of the area; and

**WHEREAS**, The city took a huge step forward in 1914, when the harbor was dredged to accommodate large ships; the operation was a great improvement to water transportation facilities and enabled the construction of ships during World War I; and

**WHEREAS**, The shipyards were active again during World War II, and more than 400 vessels were built for the war efforts; the USS *Orleck*, the Gearing Class destroyer commissioned in 1945, served in Korea, Vietnam, and the Gulf War; after being in the service of Turkey from 1982 to 1998, the ship was returned to its birthplace and today is part of the Southeast Texas War Memorial and Heritage Foundation as a museum docked in the Sabine River in downtown Orange; and

**WHEREAS**, Orange County is well established as a hub of industrial activity; along with the healthy timber-processing and shipping-related industries, the county is renowned for its production of petrochemicals, a sector that has spawned a spectacular stretch of steel, glass, catwalks, and flames; and

**WHEREAS**, Over the years, industrial development and population growth in the county have been managed with care in order to preserve natural habitats and historical sites; the forests, grasslands, rivers, marshes, and easy access to the Gulf of Mexico offer opportunities for hunting, fishing, and water sports to make Orange County a desirable recreational area; and

**WHEREAS**, It offers its citizens a well-rounded community life; the county seat is home to a number of cultural and historical resources, theaters, and museums; the Shangri La, a 250-acre private reserve with a unique ecosystem is being restored and will include a nature center for study and research; and

**WHEREAS**, Among the historic sites in the county seat is the First Presbyterian Church, an outstanding example of classic Greek Revival architecture; completed in 1912, it recently was added to the National Register of Historic Places; and

**WHEREAS**, Tourists are also attracted to Orange County by a number of festivals and events held yearly to celebrate the bounty of the area; the Annual International Gumbo Cook-Off, the

Mauriceville Crawfish Festival, the Orangefield Crab and Crawfish Festival, and the Vidor Bar-B-Q Festival draw thousands of people each year; and

**WHEREAS**, Orange County Day in Austin provides an opportunity for friends and families to honor Orange County's past and its many assets, which today are enjoyed by residents and vacationers of all ages; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 78th Legislature, hereby recognize January 27, 2003, as Orange County Day at the State Capitol and join citizens of this historic and vital region in paying tribute to this fine county; and, be it further

**RESOLVED**, That a copy of this Resolution be prepared for the residents of Orange County as an expression of esteem from the Texas Senate.

Williams

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President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on January 27, 2003.

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Secretary of the Senate

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Member, Texas Senate