

By: Hunter

H.C.R. No. 35

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, Frances Cox Henderson earned a special place in
2 history as the original First Lady of Texas, but the measure of her
3 life is much larger than her status as wife of the first governor of
4 the Lone Star State; and

5 WHEREAS, Born July 21, 1820, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania,
6 Mrs. Henderson was educated in Europe, where this exceptionally
7 talented young woman learned 18 languages, wrote and translated
8 stories, was proficient in mathematics, and became an accomplished
9 musician; and

10 WHEREAS, She met her husband-to-be, James Pinckney
11 Henderson, in Paris at the age of 19; he was serving as the envoy
12 from the Republic of Texas to England and France; the couple were
13 married in London in 1839, and arrived in their new home of San
14 Augustine, Texas, the following year; and

15 WHEREAS, Mrs. Henderson studied law so that she could handle
16 the affairs of her husband's law practice while he was away; when he
17 was elected first governor of the State of Texas in 1845, she
18 remained in San Augustine, rearing their children and helping to
19 establish Episcopal churches throughout the region; and

20 WHEREAS, Her husband, who was serving in the United States
21 Senate, passed away in 1858, and Mrs. Henderson took her family to
22 Europe so that her daughters could receive the best available
23 education and so that she could avoid questions of allegiance
24 during the Civil War; and

1 WHEREAS, A woman of vision and determination, she supported
2 women's suffrage, wrote a book about the life of a post-slavery
3 plantation worker, and established the House of Good Shepherd for
4 elderly and disabled women; late in life, she became a community
5 leader in her home of East Orange, New Jersey, where she was active
6 in the work of the local library and St. Mark's Episcopal Church;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, Frances Cox Henderson will be remembered for her
9 place in Texas history and for the grace and dignity of a life that
10 was lived to the fullest, as evidenced by extraordinary
11 scholarship, strength of faith and devotion to church, and selfless
12 charity; now, therefore, be it

13 RESOLVED, That the 79th Legislature of the State of Texas,
14 3rd Called Session, hereby pay tribute to the life and work of
15 Frances Cox Henderson and designate July 21, 2006, as Frances Cox
16 Henderson Remembrance Day.