

1-1 By: Eiland (Senate Sponsor - Jackson) H.C.R. No. 117
1-2 (In the Senate - Received from the House May 16, 2005;
1-3 May 17, 2005, read first time and referred to Committee on
1-4 Administration; May 20, 2005, reported favorably by the following
1-5 vote: Yeas 4, Nays 0; May 20, 2005, sent to printer.)

1-6 HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1-7 WHEREAS, The history of Texas is not complete without
1-8 recognition of the ships, seaports, and maritime heritage that
1-9 contributed so greatly to the development, economy, immigration,
1-10 and culture of the state in the 19th century, and the state's
1-11 preeminent symbol of this thrilling bygone era is the tall ship
1-12 *Elissa*; and

1-13 WHEREAS, In the 1970s, the city of Galveston was looking for a
1-14 ship to complement the restoration and redevelopment of the Strand,
1-15 known in the 1800s as the Wall Street of the South, and to help
1-16 Texans recognize and interpret the state's maritime heritage; and

1-17 WHEREAS, Constructed in 1877 in Aberdeen, Scotland, *Elissa* is
1-18 a three-masted, iron-hulled tall ship of the "barque" type,
1-19 measuring 205 feet long and 99 feet, 9 inches high at the mainmast,
1-20 with a cargo capacity equivalent to that of eight railroad boxcars;
1-21 and

1-22 WHEREAS, *Elissa* transported a variety of goods around the
1-23 world over the course of her more than 90 years of commercial
1-24 history, first calling at Galveston in December 1883 with a cargo of
1-25 bananas and one passenger, then sailing for Liverpool, England,
1-26 with a cargo of cotton, and calling at Galveston again in September
1-27 1886 with a cargo of what was probably lumber or sugar and sailing
1-28 for Pensacola, Florida, in ballast; and

1-29 WHEREAS, Built at the dawn of the steamship era, *Elissa*
1-30 filled a niche in maritime commerce, calling on many ports, and she
1-31 was sold from owner to owner, sailing under different names before
1-32 being readied for the scrap yards of Piraeus, Greece, where she was
1-33 recognized by a maritime archeologist; and

1-34 WHEREAS, *Elissa* was acquired by the Galveston Historical
1-35 Foundation in 1975, and after some initial work in Greece, she was
1-36 towed in 1978 to the Royal Navy yard in Gibraltar; that same year,
1-37 *Elissa* was placed on the National Register of Historic Places,
1-38 becoming the first object to achieve this status while outside the
1-39 territorial limits of the United States; and

1-40 WHEREAS, In 1979, *Elissa* returned to Galveston, her former
1-41 port of call and new home, and intensive efforts began to raise
1-42 funding and restore her to her 1877 sailing configuration; that
1-43 goal achieved, *Elissa* sailed again on the Gulf of Mexico in
1-44 September 1982; and

1-45 WHEREAS, *Elissa* is preserved and maintained by her volunteer
1-46 crew, who donate thousands of hours annually and sail her at least
1-47 once a year to preserve the seamanship skills of square-rig
1-48 handling for future generations, providing guests with the rare
1-49 opportunity to sail on a historic vessel; and

1-50 WHEREAS, Restored to her former glory as a seaworthy sailing
1-51 ship, *Elissa* is an irreplaceable piece of living history, and her
1-52 stature is underscored by her designation as one of "America's
1-53 Treasures" by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and as a
1-54 National Historic Landmark; and

1-55 WHEREAS, *Elissa*, with the support of the Texas Seaport
1-56 Museum, provides students and the public with a rare opportunity to
1-57 visualize the maritime heritage and culture of Texas and its
1-58 coastal waters; and

1-59 WHEREAS, Even today, the sight of *Elissa* in full sail evokes
1-60 the color and excitement of the age of sailing ships, and this
1-61 vibrant reminder of an essential piece of our shared history,
1-62 representing Texas, is indeed deserving of special recognition;
1-63 now, therefore, be it

1-64 RESOLVED, That the 79th Legislature of the State of Texas

2-1 hereby designate *Elissa* the official tall ship of Texas.

2-2

* * * * *