

By: Brown of Kaufman

H.R. No. 573

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Malakoff, in Henderson County, is celebrating a
2 special milestone in its history with the commemoration of its
3 sesquicentennial in 2005; and

4 WHEREAS, The first recorded settlers in the vicinity of
5 Malakoff were Jane Irvine and her family, who immigrated to the area
6 before 1835 and built a gristmill on Caney Creek; this enterprise
7 became the nucleus of a settlement, known initially as Caney Creek
8 and later as Mitcham Chapel, after the Methodist church organized
9 there by the Reverend Hezekiah Mitcham; and

10 WHEREAS, When residents applied for a post office in the
11 1850s, their initial choices for a name were rejected because they
12 were already in use; as an alternative, post office officials
13 suggested Malakoff, the name of a fortified position in Sevastopol,
14 Russia, whose capture by the French in 1855 represented the last
15 major fighting of the Crimean War; the community's inhabitants
16 acquiesced, and by the end of 1855 their post office had been
17 established; and

18 WHEREAS, Malakoff's early prosperity was based largely on the
19 production of cotton, which area farmers shipped down the Trinity
20 River; by about 1860, the town boasted two cotton gins, a church,
21 and a subscription school, as well as several stores, a saloon, and
22 a blacksmith's shop; and

23 WHEREAS, The Civil War decimated Malakoff's economy, but the
24 situation began to improve after track for the St. Louis

1 Southwestern Railway was laid through the county in 1880; most of
2 Malakoff's businesses and residents soon relocated to a new town
3 site along the railroad line, a mile and a half to the south of their
4 old home; and

5 WHEREAS, During the 20th century, Malakoff became closely
6 identified with two industries: brick production and coal mining;
7 the site of brick works for at least 100 years, the town has also
8 been the home of an innovator, Thomas Anthony Bartlett, who devised
9 a means for making colored brick; in 1904 he exhibited his white
10 brick at the St. Louis World's Fair and carried home a blue ribbon;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, Lignite was discovered near Malakoff in 1912, and
13 during the 1920s and 1930s the town's coal mines constituted the
14 largest industry in Henderson County; the mining operation employed
15 more than 600 individuals and spurred the growth of Malakoff's
16 population, which rose from 750 in 1920 to 2,168 in 1940; and

17 WHEREAS, Latinos made up much of the workforce at the mines,
18 and the presence of a large Hispanic community in Malakoff prompted
19 the establishment there of an affiliate of Cruz Azul Mexicana, a
20 charitable organization in San Antonio; it may also have accounted
21 for the opening of a restaurant in Malakoff by the Cuellar family,
22 who subsequently built the popular El Chico chain; and

23 WHEREAS, Employment at the mines began to decline after the
24 nearby electric generating plant switched to using natural gas,
25 rather than coal, in 1942, and the mines closed in 1945; since then,
26 a miners' reunion has been held in Malakoff every five years; and

27 WHEREAS, Malakoff incorporated in 1948, and its population

1 began to grow again with the creation in the 1960s of the Cedar
2 Creek Reservoir; today the town is home to more than 2,200
3 residents, the largest number in its history; and

4 WHEREAS, Sponsored by the Malakoff Area Chamber of Commerce,
5 the ceremonies honoring Malakoff's sesquicentennial are taking
6 place during the town's annual Cornbread Festival on April 30,
7 2005, and the careful preparations that have been afoot for months
8 are sure to produce an event that will be hugely enjoyed by all who
9 attend; and

10 WHEREAS, Over the years, the citizens of this friendly,
11 close-knit community have sought to preserve the best of their past
12 while working to build an even brighter and more promising future
13 for their children, and it is a pleasure to join in commemorating
14 Malakoff's 150th anniversary; now, therefore, be it

15 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 79th Texas
16 Legislature hereby congratulate the citizens of Malakoff on the
17 occasion of that town's sesquicentennial and extend to its
18 residents sincere best wishes for a grand and memorable
19 celebration.