

By: England

H.C.R. No. 22

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1           WHEREAS, The purple martin is one of this country's  
2 best-loved songbirds, and the city of Grand Prairie has become a  
3 leading center for purple martin conservation in the Lone Star  
4 State; and

5           WHEREAS, A member of the swallow family, purple martins are  
6 admired for their iridescent blue-black coloring, their pleasant  
7 song, and their graceful aerial acrobatics; they feed on insects,  
8 catching all of their food in flight, and drink by skimming the  
9 surface of a pond and scooping up water with their lower bills; and

10           WHEREAS, Purple martins fly north in the spring to breed in  
11 Mexico, the United States, and Canada; after their young are  
12 hatched and fledged, a process that takes approximately 70 days,  
13 the birds migrate south again to their winter range in the lowlands  
14 east of the Andes; and

15           WHEREAS, In the western part of North America, purple martins  
16 still nest in natural cavities in trees, cliff faces, and the like,  
17 but east of the Rocky Mountains, for more than a century now the  
18 bird has nested almost exclusively in artificial housing supplied  
19 by humans; Native Americans have been hanging hollowed-out gourds  
20 to accommodate the birds for hundreds, if not thousands, of years,  
21 and today it is estimated that more than a million "landlords" put  
22 up housing for purple martins, who typically return to their last  
23 successful homesite; and

24           WHEREAS, Since the founding of the Purple Martin Landlords of

1 North Texas in 1999, members have supported research concerning  
2 these birds and have worked to educate area citizens about their  
3 needs; based in Grand Prairie, the club has further promoted the  
4 construction of purple martin housing in various public locations  
5 around the city, including the municipal golf course, Safe Side  
6 City Park, and the Kirby Creek Park Natural Science Education  
7 Center, as well as at Loyd Park on Joe Pool Lake; and

8       WHEREAS, Purple martins also feature prominently in public  
9 art around Grand Prairie, notably in murals at Johnny Stanton  
10 Garden and at the intersection of I-30 and Beltline Road; in  
11 addition, a pair of purple martins dominate the bas-relief design  
12 that appears on the section of State Highway 161 that is now being  
13 constructed through the city; and

14       WHEREAS, Each year, the mayor and city council of Grand  
15 Prairie proclaim Purple Martin Day to raise public awareness and  
16 encourage support for the perpetuation of that species; and

17       WHEREAS, Grand Prairie residents have demonstrated a special  
18 affinity for purple martins and devoted considerable time and  
19 resources to help them flourish; thanks to these landlords' keen  
20 interest and energetic efforts, springtime in their city now  
21 heralds the return of large numbers of this shimmering bird, whose  
22 distinctive song and aerial displays have become a source of  
23 immense delight to countless observers; now, therefore, be it

24       RESOLVED, That the 80th Legislature of the State of Texas  
25 hereby designate Grand Prairie as the official Purple Martin  
26 Capital of North Texas.