

1-1 By: Gallego (Senate Sponsor - Uresti) H.C.R. No. 102  
1-2 (In the Senate - Received from the House May 9, 2007;  
1-3 May 10, 2007, read first time and referred to Committee on  
1-4 Government Organization; May 17, 2007, reported favorably by the  
1-5 following vote: Yeas 4, Nays 0; May 17, 2007, sent to printer.)

1-6 HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1-7 WHEREAS, The State of Texas has customarily recognized a  
1-8 variety of official symbols as tangible representations of the  
1-9 state's culture and history; and

1-10 WHEREAS, The precious metal silver has played a prominent  
1-11 role in the story of the Lone Star State, and it continues to be a  
1-12 visible part of Texas culture, reflecting the enduring influence of  
1-13 Spanish colonial design and the western heritage that is so much a  
1-14 part of the state's lore; and

1-15 WHEREAS, Silver has been mined in Texas for more than three  
1-16 centuries, beginning shortly after the Spanish established their  
1-17 first permanent settlements in the area in the late 1600s; the first  
1-18 mines were founded by Franciscan friars who dug for silver deposits  
1-19 near El Paso, and these same sites were worked periodically for the  
1-20 next 200 years; and

1-21 WHEREAS, In the late 1800s, prospectors began exploring other  
1-22 parts of West Texas, with figures such as John W. Spencer, Samuel B.  
1-23 Buckley, Lieutenant John L. Bullis, and Colonel William R. Shafter  
1-24 focusing their efforts on Presidio County; this led to the opening  
1-25 of the Shafter Mining District, which was the site of the famous  
1-26 Presidio Mine; operated between 1884 and 1947, it produced more  
1-27 than 90 percent of all the silver that has ever been mined in Texas  
1-28 and became a prominent business that spurred greater development in  
1-29 the Big Bend region; and

1-30 WHEREAS, Other mining districts in the state also yielded  
1-31 silver; Hudspeth and Culberson Counties were home to the Van  
1-32 Horn-Allamore and the Plata Verde Districts, and Hudspeth County  
1-33 also contained the Quitman Mountains District; in addition,  
1-34 Brewster County was the site of the Altuda Mountain District, and  
1-35 mining took place at locations in Llano, Mason, and Gillespie  
1-36 Counties in the Hill Country; in total, Texas mines yielded more  
1-37 than 33 million fine ounces of silver, which had a value of nearly  
1-38 \$23.5 million, between 1885 and 1952; the manual labor of carving  
1-39 these riches from the rocks fell to a hardy group of miners who, in  
1-40 true Texan fashion, used their skill and determination to complete  
1-41 a difficult and dangerous job; and

1-42 WHEREAS, Most mining came to an end in the 1950s, but interest  
1-43 in harvesting the state's silver deposits continues; 20 million  
1-44 troy ounces of the metal are believed to still remain in the Shafter  
1-45 Mining District, and resources of this kind may prove profitable  
1-46 given silver's widespread use in commercial and industrial  
1-47 applications, where it plays a role in everything from photography  
1-48 to coin making, x-rays, water treatment, and electronics; and

1-49 WHEREAS, Jewelry makers and other artisans also rely on this  
1-50 precious metal, and the stately sheen of silver is a key element in  
1-51 beautiful stylistic designs, both rustic and refined, that can be  
1-52 seen throughout Texas; in belt buckles, tie clasps, and boot  
1-53 decorations, it is a staple of the western-wear fashions that  
1-54 harken back to the state's pioneer past; moreover, silver's rich,  
1-55 pure luster also makes it a favorite material for religious jewelry  
1-56 and other devotional objects, as well as any item or decoration that  
1-57 may benefit from its luxurious, glittering hues; and

1-58 WHEREAS, In both its historical and economic significance and  
1-59 its enduring connections to Texas imagery and culture, silver is a  
1-60 fitting symbol for the state and its people, and it is indeed  
1-61 appropriate that this metal receive special legislative  
1-62 recognition; now, therefore, be it

1-63 RESOLVED, That the 80th Legislature of the State of Texas  
1-64 hereby designate silver as the official precious metal of Texas.

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