

By: Keffer

H.R. No. 89

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The Texas Alliance of Rail Districts, a nonprofit
2 organization established in 2005, is rendering outstanding service
3 to the citizens of this state through its effective promotion of
4 rail transportation; and

5 WHEREAS, Railways have played a vital role in the development
6 of Texas since 1853, when the Buffalo Bayou, Brazos and Colorado
7 Railway began operation; in time, Texas acquired the most rail
8 mileage of any state in the nation, a network that connected rural
9 and urban areas and linked Texas with other parts of the country and
10 the continent; for more than a century and a half, trains have
11 provided Texas communities of all sizes with a viable option for
12 shipping and receiving raw materials, manufactured goods, and
13 agricultural products; and

14 WHEREAS, In 1981, the Texas Legislature passed a bill
15 enabling the creation of rural rail transportation districts
16 (RRTDs) to assist in the preservation of railway infrastructure;
17 many rural communities have historically depended on railroads as a
18 primary means of transporting area harvests, and for those locales,
19 the continued availability of rail transportation is a critical
20 issue; and

21 WHEREAS, The oldest RRTD in the state, the Cen-Tex Rural Rail
22 Transportation District, was initiated by the Hood County
23 Commissioners Court and began operation in 1990, serving Hood and
24 Johnson Counties; today the Cen-Tex RRTD also embraces Brown,

1 Comanche, and Erath Counties and operates with the support and
2 collaboration of the Lake Granbury Area Chamber of Commerce and the
3 Fort Worth & Western Railroad Company; and

4 WHEREAS, Since the formation of the Cen-Tex RRTD more than 15
5 years ago, 40 rural rail districts, encompassing 85 counties, have
6 been created; in addition to preserving critical rail service,
7 these RRTDs are being used increasingly as tools to promote new
8 economic development; and

9 WHEREAS, The Texas Alliance of Rail Districts, under the able
10 direction of president John Helsley, assists counties in
11 establishing rail districts, setting goals, and marketing their
12 assets; among the many projects in which the alliance has recently
13 been involved are the construction of rail to serve new industrial
14 parks in Central and South Texas, as well as three new ethanol
15 plants in the Panhandle; the alliance also helped to create the
16 Bexar County Rail District, which was instrumental in bringing a
17 Toyota plant to San Antonio; and

18 WHEREAS, Rural rail transportation districts have been
19 responsible for saving hundreds of miles of rail from likely
20 abandonment, planning new rail lines, and attracting new industry
21 to the Lone Star State, and the Texas Alliance of Rail Districts is
22 providing invaluable guidance and support to those significant
23 endeavors; now, therefore, be it

24 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 80th Texas
25 Legislature hereby recognize the Texas Alliance of Rail Districts
26 for its major contributions to the preservation and promotion of
27 rail transportation and that all associated with that organization

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1 be extended sincere best wishes for continued success.