

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 483

WHEREAS, The Senate of the State of Texas is pleased to recognize the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, the United States Maritime Administration, Texas A&M University, and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service for their exemplary partnership in acquiring the historic U.S.T.S. *Texas Clipper* for preparation and deployment as an artificial reef in the Gulf of Mexico off the Texas coast; and

WHEREAS, The *Texas Clipper*, commissioned by the United States Navy as the U.S.S. *Queens* in December of 1944, is a troop transport ship with a rich naval history of service to our country during World War II; the ship and its crew ferried fresh troops into battle and cared for and shuttled the wounded from Iwo Jima; the ship also played a part in the American occupation at Sasebo, Japan, before being decommissioned in 1946; and

WHEREAS, From 1948 to 1958, the *Texas Clipper* was commissioned the S.S. *Excambion*, one of the postwar Four Aces cruise liners and cargo vessels for American Export Lines that carried passengers from New York City to such Mediterranean ports as Barcelona, Marseilles, Naples, Beirut, Alexandria, and Genoa; and

WHEREAS, The *Texas Clipper* was commissioned as the first Texas Maritime Training Academy ship and served sea cadets at Texas A&M University at Galveston from 1965 to 1996; the ship spent summers at sea and provided an ocean-going campus for about 200 students at a time; students learned the workings of a ship, studied the world's oceans, and broadened their horizons by studying outside the normal constraints of a classroom; and

WHEREAS, After 30 consecutive summer-training cruises, the sailing days of the 50-year-old ship were over, and on August 4, 1994, under the command of Captain Peter Jaime Bourgeois, *Texas Clipper* completed its final training cruise; for the next two years, it was used as a dockside dormitory for Seaborne Conservation Corps, an educational and job-training program for at-risk high school students; *Texas Clipper* now joins the proud fleet of Liberty Ships that were deployed as reefs off the Texas coast during 1975 and 1976; and

WHEREAS, As an artificial reef, *Texas Clipper* will enhance fishery resources by creating a habitat that will attract reef-associated species and improve their spawning potential and that will offer a significant recreational site for sports fishermen and divers; the complexity of the ship's structure will provide a habitat for numerous marine species, including demersal and pelagic finfishes, and the *Texas Clipper* will endure as an environmental, ecological, and economic asset to this state; now, therefore, be it

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RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 80th Legislature, hereby commend the outstanding professionals of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, the United States Maritime Administration, Texas A&M University, and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service for their contributions to the citizens of this state by their acquisition of the *Texas Clipper* for use as an artificial reef in the Gulf of Mexico; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution be prepared in their honor and as an expression of high regard from the Texas Senate.

Lucio

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on March 15, 2007.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate