

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 709

WHEREAS, The Senate of the State of Texas is pleased to recognize the Texas Jewish Historical Society for its efforts to preserve the history of the Texas Jewish experience; and

WHEREAS, The Texas Jewish Historical Society began in 1980 after Rabbi Jimmy Kessler published a letter in Jewish newspapers in Houston and the Dallas and Fort Worth area calling for the creation of a historical society to preserve the history of the Texas Jewish experience; and

WHEREAS, The society has grown to over 750 family members and has sponsored and encouraged research and provided a forum for scholars and students of Jewish history and culture in Texas; and

WHEREAS, A permanent archive of source materials and histories has been established at The University of Texas American History Center in Austin as part of the Barker Texas History Collection; and

WHEREAS, The earliest Jews, who arrived with the conquistadors, were attracted to Texas for the same reasons that the non-Jewish immigrants were; Texas promised seemingly limitless potential opportunities and offered more religious freedom than Europe; and

WHEREAS, The early settlers followed a pattern of forming a cemetery-benevolent society and then establishing a synagogue; the first chartered Jewish congregation in Texas, Congregation Beth Israel, was founded in Houston in 1859; and

WHEREAS, By the turn of the century, numerous congregations had been organized, and several Jewish communities began benevolent associations, such as chapters of the International Order of B'nai B'rith, literary societies, community lecture series, and afternoon schools; and

WHEREAS, The Texas Jewish Historical Society preserves, publishes, and disseminates materials referring to the settlement and the history of Jews in Texas and their participation in its growth, and their integral role in Texas history; the society is holding its 2007 gathering April 20 through 22 in Odessa; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 80th Legislature, hereby commend the members of the Texas Jewish Historical Society and extend to them best wishes for a successful and informative meeting; and, be it further

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RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be prepared as an expression of high regard from the Texas Senate.

Seliger

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on April 16, 2007.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate