

By: Wentworth

S.R. No. 1187

SENATE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The national effort to beautify the country's highways began in earnest with Lady Bird Johnson, wife of President Lyndon B. Johnson; thanks to her strong leadership and initiative, the 89th Congress of the United States passed the Highway Beautification Act of 1965; and

WHEREAS, Lady Bird Johnson's vision of a more beautiful America was further advanced by the passage of the federal Surface Transportation and Uniform Relocation Assistance Act of 1987 (STURAA); sponsored by United States Senator Lloyd Bentsen of Texas, the Act included the requirement that one-quarter of one percent of federal funds expended for highway system landscaping must be used to plant wildflowers; and

WHEREAS, This dedication of federal highway funds for wildflower plantings has made it possible for states to plant wildflowers on thousands of acres of highway rights-of-way; in addition to being an important part of each region's identity, these native plants are adapted to area rainfall conditions and generally require less maintenance than nonnative species; and

WHEREAS, The Texas Department of Transportation has taken full advantage of the federal Surface Transportation and Uniform Relocation Assistance Act of 1987 and Lady Bird Johnson's leadership on roadside beautification to create inspiring wildflower landscapes along Texas highways and allow millions of

Texans to enjoy the natural beauty of native plants and gain an appreciation for the state's natural heritage; and

WHEREAS, Helping state and county transportation departments utilize native plants and wildflowers along highway roadsides was also a top priority in 1982 when Lady Bird Johnson founded the organization now known as the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center at The University of Texas at Austin; and

WHEREAS, Twenty-five years later, the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center remains a leader in promoting the use of native plants and wildflowers for highway system landscaping, and it is fitting that the center's 25th anniversary coincides with the 20th anniversary of the federal Surface Transportation and Uniform Relocation Assistance Act of 1987; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 80th Legislature, hereby recognize the 20th anniversary of the federal Surface Transportation and Uniform Relocation Assistance Act of 1987 and the 25th anniversary of the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center at The University of Texas at Austin; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the Senate also recognize Lady Bird Johnson's lasting contributions to the beauty and ecological health of highway roadsides in the state and nation and the Texas Department of Transportation's national leadership in integrating wildflower plantings into state highway system projects; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the Senate encourage further collaboration between the Texas Department of Transportation and the Lady Bird

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Johnson Wildflower Center to create one or more demonstration roadside wildflower projects, raise awareness about Texas wildflowers, and enhance state efforts to showcase the beauty and ecological importance of Texas wildflowers; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the secretary of the senate forward official copies of this resolution to the executive directors of the Texas Department of Transportation and the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center at The University of Texas at Austin.