

By: Pena

H.C.R. No. 10

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1           WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln, the 16th president of the United  
2 States, was born on February 12, 1809, 200 years ago; guiding the  
3 affairs of state with a rare degree of humility and charity, no less  
4 than with a firm resolve, he served as the Union commander-in-chief  
5 during this nation's most devastating war and led, ultimately, in  
6 extinguishing an institution that had long belied the country's  
7 democratic precepts; and

8           WHEREAS, A native of Kentucky, Mr. Lincoln spent his young  
9 adulthood in New Salem, Illinois, where he kept a store and managed  
10 a mill; in 1832, during the Black Hawk War, he was elected a captain  
11 of militia, a sign of the high esteem in which he was held amongst  
12 his neighbors; and

13           WHEREAS, Though he had little formal education, Mr. Lincoln  
14 persevered in teaching himself, and in 1836 he was admitted to the  
15 bar; the following year, he moved to Springfield, the new state  
16 capital, and over the next two and a half decades he built a highly  
17 successful legal practice; and

18           WHEREAS, Drawn to politics at an early age, Abraham Lincoln  
19 made his first run for public office at the age of 23, when he  
20 unsuccessfully sought a seat in the Illinois Legislature; two years  
21 later he prevailed, and he went on to serve four terms in the  
22 Illinois statehouse, from 1834 to 1841, as well as a term in the  
23 U.S. House of Representatives, from 1847 to 1849; and

24           WHEREAS, An opponent of the Mexican War, Abraham Lincoln

1 found himself out of step with his constituents and retired from the  
2 U.S. Congress at the end of his term; in 1854, however, passage of  
3 the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which opened the territories to slavery,  
4 brought him back into the political arena; though not an  
5 abolitionist, he abhorred slavery and opposed its extension; in  
6 1856, he left the Whigs to join the newly created Republican Party;  
7 and

8         WHEREAS, Two years later, as the Republican nominee for  
9 senator from Illinois, Mr. Lincoln engaged the Democratic  
10 candidate, Stephen Douglas, in seven widely publicized debates; the  
11 state legislature reelected Mr. Douglas as senator, but Mr. Lincoln  
12 emerged from the contest as a nationally recognized political  
13 leader; and

14         WHEREAS, In 1860, at the Republican convention in Chicago,  
15 Abraham Lincoln was nominated for the presidency of the United  
16 States on the third ballot; facing three other opponents in the  
17 general election, he won with 39 percent of the popular vote; by the  
18 time he took office in March 1861, seven southern states had  
19 seceded; and

20         WHEREAS, A little more than a month after Mr. Lincoln's  
21 inauguration, Fort Sumter fell to Confederate forces, setting off a  
22 cataclysmic, four-year-long struggle over the future of the Union;  
23 committed, first and foremost, to keeping the nation intact,  
24 President Lincoln greatly expanded the powers of the presidency and  
25 bent his energies to mastering the intricacies of government  
26 business; at the same time, he sought continually for a commanding  
27 general who would bring victories to the North; and

1           WHEREAS, The mounting casualties and cost of the war  
2 gradually led President Lincoln, as well as many of his countrymen,  
3 to view the destruction of slavery as an essential war aim; after  
4 issuing the Emancipation Proclamation, which pertained only to  
5 slaves in areas still in rebellion against the federal government,  
6 President Lincoln worked to achieve passage of the Thirteenth  
7 Amendment, which abolished slavery throughout the country; and

8           WHEREAS, In early April 1865, a few days before General  
9 Robert E. Lee surrendered his troops at Appomattox, President  
10 Lincoln visited Richmond, the newly fallen capital of the  
11 Confederacy; following the president's return to Washington, a  
12 close friend observed that "that indescribable sadness which had  
13 previously seemed [a constituent] element of his very being, had  
14 [suddenly given way to] an equally indescribable expression of  
15 serene joy[,] as if conscious that the great purpose of his life had  
16 been achieved"; and

17           WHEREAS, Though President Lincoln prosecuted the war with an  
18 unswerving determination, the magnanimity of his spirit continues  
19 to resonate powerfully to this day, and his words calling Americans  
20 to a noble purpose are among the best known of any president; in his  
21 Gettysburg Address, moreover, he held aloft a vision of this  
22 country that has become an integral part of the American creed; and

23           WHEREAS, At home and abroad, Abraham Lincoln remains one of  
24 the most revered figures in the pantheon of American heroes, and  
25 this anniversary of his birth provides a fitting occasion to  
26 reflect on his immeasurable contributions to this nation and to the  
27 articulation of this country's highest ideals; now, therefore, be

1 it

2           RESOLVED, That the 81st Legislature of the State of Texas  
3 hereby commemorate the 200th anniversary of the birth of Abraham  
4 Lincoln and encourage appropriate celebrations of this milestone  
5 throughout the Lone Star State.