

By: Anderson

H.C.R. No. 63

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1           WHEREAS, Throughout her life, Laura Bush has combined a  
2 gentle graciousness and elegance with a passion for causes of the  
3 most fundamental importance, and her fellow Texans are proud to  
4 claim her as one of their own; and

5           WHEREAS, Born and raised in Midland, the former Laura Lane  
6 Welch graduated with a degree in education from Southern Methodist  
7 University in 1968 and earned a master of library science degree  
8 from The University of Texas at Austin in 1973; she worked as a  
9 teacher and librarian in Dallas, Houston, and Austin before  
10 marrying George W. Bush in Midland in 1977; and

11           WHEREAS, Keenly aware that an ability to read is vital to a  
12 child's ability to learn, Mrs. Bush launched major initiatives to  
13 promote literacy skills among children, especially those from  
14 disadvantaged backgrounds, after becoming the First Lady of Texas  
15 in 1995; in related undertakings, she introduced programs to foster  
16 parenting skills and encourage communities to develop family  
17 literacy programs; she was also instrumental in founding the Texas  
18 Book Festival, which premiered in 1996; a fund-raiser for Texas  
19 public libraries, the gathering now ranks as one of the foremost  
20 literary festivals in the country; and

21           WHEREAS, While living in the Governor's Mansion, Mrs. Bush  
22 additionally advocated for breast cancer and Alzheimer's awareness  
23 and research; she also opened several Rainbow Rooms, which provide  
24 emergency supplies for abused and neglected children, and she

1 promoted a private-sector effort to provide additional resources to  
2 caseworkers with Child Protective Services; and

3         WHEREAS, With her husband's swearing in as the 43rd president  
4 of the United States in January 2001, Mrs. Bush immediately began  
5 work; before the year was out, she had hosted, with sponsorship from  
6 the Library of Congress, the first National Book Festival; since  
7 its inception, attendance at that event has risen from  
8 approximately 30,000 to more than 120,000; in November 2001,  
9 Mrs. Bush also hosted the inaugural White House Salute to America's  
10 Authors; and

11         WHEREAS, During her husband's presidency, Mrs. Bush  
12 supported an array of programs intended to ensure that all young  
13 children are ready to read and learn when they enter school and that  
14 they have qualified, well-trained teachers, especially in the  
15 poorest neighborhoods; she hosted two White House summits in  
16 connection with that initiative, as well as White House Conferences  
17 on School Libraries and Global Literacy, and she championed  
18 legislation to address a national shortage of librarians; in 2003,  
19 she was named an Honorary Ambassador for the United Nations Decade  
20 of Literacy; and

21         WHEREAS, In conjunction with her Women's Health and Wellness  
22 Initiative, Mrs. Bush served as national ambassador for the Heart  
23 Truth campaign to raise awareness about heart disease among women,  
24 and she worked closely with the Susan G. Komen for the Cure breast  
25 cancer awareness and research campaign; and

26         WHEREAS, Mrs. Bush made numerous goodwill trips abroad,  
27 including several to Africa, during which she promoted HIV/AIDS and

1 malaria awareness; she has advocated for women's rights in the  
2 Middle East and has spoken out forcefully in support of the  
3 pro-democracy movement in Myanmar; and

4 WHEREAS, Among the many honors she has received have been  
5 awards from the Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity, the  
6 Kuwait-America Foundation, the American Library Association,  
7 Vanderbilt University, and Christian Freedom International; and

8 WHEREAS, Mrs. Bush is the mother of twin daughters, Jenna and  
9 Barbara, who graduated in 2004 from UT-Austin and Yale University,  
10 respectively, and she and President Bush have recently welcomed a  
11 son-in-law, Jenna's husband, Henry Hager, into the family; and

12 WHEREAS, Through the years, Americans and people the world  
13 over have come to know Laura Bush as a devoted wife, loving mother,  
14 and deeply engaged citizen and humanitarian, and in both Austin and  
15 the nation's capital, she leaves behind an inspiring legacy in her  
16 role as First Lady; now, therefore, be it

17 RESOLVED, That the 81st Legislature of the State of Texas  
18 hereby warmly welcome Laura Bush back to Texas and extend to her its  
19 deep gratitude for her exceptional public service; and, be it  
20 further

21 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
22 prepared for Mrs. Bush as an expression of high regard by the Texas  
23 House of Representatives and Senate.