

By: Weber

H.C.R. No. 85

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, Public-spirited citizens of Matagorda County are
2 gathering in Austin on March 10, 2009, to celebrate Matagorda
3 County Day at the State Capitol; and

4 WHEREAS, This region of prairie, salt marshes, and coastal
5 waterways has long been home to abundant wildlife, including
6 bobcats, coyotes, deer, and waterfowl; the name Matagorda, a
7 Spanish phrase meaning "thick brush," derived from the dense
8 canebrakes that once grew along the shore; and

9 WHEREAS, Karankawa Indians were living in the area when the
10 first European explorers passed through in the 1500s, and they were
11 still there, though fewer in number, in 1822 when Stephen F. Austin
12 founded a colony at the mouth of the Colorado River; the town of
13 Matagorda was established in 1829 as a military post, and two years
14 later a customs house was opened in the community; and

15 WHEREAS, Matagorda County was among the original 23 counties
16 created by the Republic of Texas in 1836; for a number of years, the
17 town of Matagorda ranked as the second-largest seaport in Texas,
18 and the first several decades of the county's history witnessed the
19 development of significant cotton, sugar, and cattle industries;
20 after the boll weevil became a threat to the cotton crop at the turn
21 of the 20th century, more and more farmers began to grow rice; the
22 discovery of oil and sulfur in the early 1900s led to further
23 diversification of the area's economy; and

24 WHEREAS, Today, farming, ranching, and petroleum continue to

1 be the economic mainstays of Matagorda County; the area is also the
2 site of the South Texas Project Electric Generating Station, one of
3 the largest nuclear power plants in the nation, which supplies
4 electricity to more than one million homes and businesses in South
5 Central Texas; other enterprises and industries include shipyards,
6 commercial fishing, and tourism; and

7 WHEREAS, Bay City, the county seat, hosts the county fair,
8 livestock show, and rodeo in early spring and the Rice Festival in
9 the fall, while attractions in Palacios include the reenactment of
10 La Salle's landing on the Fourth of July and the Texas Seafood
11 Festival in October; yearly highlights in Sargent include the July
12 Jamboree and, in November, the Lighted Boat Parade; and

13 WHEREAS, Residents and visitors alike enjoy the county's fine
14 beaches and the opportunities for fishing along Matagorda Bay; in
15 addition, the area is renowned among birders across the nation as a
16 premier destination, with the annual Mad Island Christmas Bird
17 Count consistently placing in the top five national counts; the
18 fascinating story of the final expedition of the French explorer La
19 Salle is featured at museums in Bay City and Palacios, where
20 artifacts from his ship, *La Belle*, are displayed; a half-scale
21 replica of the ship is docked in Palacios; and

22 WHEREAS, Matagorda County is blessed with a rich history and
23 abundant natural resources, and its residents may take great pride
24 in their legacy and bright future; now, therefore, be it

25 RESOLVED, That the 81st Legislature of the State of Texas
26 hereby declare March 10, 2009, as Matagorda County Day at the State
27 Capitol and extend to the visiting delegation sincere best wishes

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1 for an enjoyable stay in Austin.