

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, March 31, 2009, marks the 131st anniversary of the  
2 birth of Jack Johnson, a native of Galveston and the first African  
3 American to win the world heavyweight boxing championship; and

4           WHEREAS, After gaining experience as a sparring partner,  
5 Mr. Johnson began fighting in private clubs in and around  
6 Galveston, and in 1897 he became a professional prizefighter; in  
7 1903, he won the Negro heavyweight championship, and five years  
8 later, in a victorious match in Australia, he claimed the world  
9 heavyweight title; and

10          WHEREAS, Outraged by Mr. Johnson's triumph, numerous  
11 commentators voiced the racial prejudice common in the early 1900s  
12 and called for his defeat by a white boxer; eventually, a bout was  
13 arranged with Jim Jeffries, a former heavyweight champion; on July  
14 4, 1910, Mr. Johnson knocked out his foe in the 15th round to retain  
15 his title; his reign as heavyweight champ extended for five years,  
16 but his life underwent a major change in 1913, when he was convicted  
17 on a contrived charge; to avoid a yearlong prison sentence, he fled  
18 the country and settled in Europe; and

19          WHEREAS, Mr. Johnson was in Spain when the United States  
20 entered World War I, and he became active in U.S. military  
21 intelligence; his work helped to prevent German submarine crews  
22 from landing on the Spanish coast; and

23          WHEREAS, After returning to the United States in 1920,  
24 Mr. Johnson served his prison sentence and also fought in

1 exhibition matches, refereed fights, and worked with other boxers  
2 as a manager and sometimes as a trainer; during World War II, he  
3 again stepped forward to serve his country by encouraging citizens  
4 to buy war bonds; in 1954, eight years after he died in an  
5 automobile accident, he was inducted into the Boxing Hall of Fame;  
6 and

7         WHEREAS, In 1967, *The Great White Hope*, a play based loosely  
8 on Mr. Johnson's life, premiered in Washington, D.C.; the following  
9 year, the play moved to Broadway, and James Earl Jones and Jane  
10 Alexander won Tony Awards for their performances in the leading  
11 roles; the drama was made into a film in 1970; and

12         WHEREAS, An enormously gifted athlete, Mr. Johnson was  
13 famous for his flawless boxing and near-perfect defense; he fought  
14 in 113 matches and lost only 6; unbowed in the face of racism, he  
15 exhibited great personal courage and, in times of national crisis,  
16 signal patriotism; now, therefore, be it

17         RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 81st Texas  
18 Legislature hereby recognize March 31, 2009, as Jack Johnson Day at  
19 the State Capitol in honor of this distinguished Texan and  
20 exceptional athlete.

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Straus	Gattis	Menendez
Allen	Geren	Merritt
Alonzo	Giddings	Miklos
Alvarado	Gonzales	Miller of Comal
Anchia	Gonzalez Toureilles	Miller of Erath
Anderson	Guillen	Moody
Aycock	Gutierrez	Morrison
Berman	Hamilton	Naishtat
Bohac	Hancock	Oliveira
Bolton	Hardcastle	Olivo
Bonnen	Harless	Orr
Branch	Harper-Brown	Ortiz, Jr.
Brown of Kaufman	Hartnett	Otto
Brown of Brazos	Heflin	Parker
Burnam	Hernandez	Patrick
Button	Herrero	Paxton
Callegari	Hilderbran	Peña
Castro	Hochberg	Phillips
Chavez	Hodge	Pickett
Chisum	Homer	Pierson
Christian	Hopson	Pitts
Cohen	Howard of Fort Bend	Quintanilla
Coleman	Howard of Travis	Raymond
Cook	Hughes	Riddle
Corte	Hunter	Rios Ybarra
Crabb	Isett	Ritter
Craddick	Jackson	Rodriguez
Creighton	Jones	Rose
Crownover	Keffer	Sheffield
Darby	Kent	Shelton
Davis of Harris	King of Parker	Smith of Tarrant
Davis of Dallas	King of Taylor	Smith of Harris
Deshotel	King of Zavala	Smithee
Driver	Kleinschmidt	Solomons
Dukes	Kolkhorst	Strama
Dunnam	Kuempel	Swinford
Dutton	Laubenberg	Taylor
Edwards	Legler	Thibaut
Eiland	Leibowitz	Thompson
Eissler	Lewis	Truitt
Elkins	Lucio III	Turner of Tarrant
England	Madden	Turner of Harris
Farabee	Maldonado	Vaught
Farias	Mallory Caraway	Veasey
Farrar	Marquez	Villarreal
Fletcher	Martinez	Vo
Flores	Martinez Fischer	Walle
Flynn	McCall	Weber
Frost	McClendon	Woolley
Gallego	McReynolds	Zerwas

H.R. No. 220

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Speaker of the House

I certify that H.R. No. 220 was adopted by the House on  
February 26, 2009, by a non-record vote.

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Chief Clerk of the House