

By: Kolkhorst

H.R. No. 561

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Proud residents of Washington County are gathering
2 in Austin on February 24, 2009, to celebrate the unique role their
3 county has played in the history and ongoing development of the Lone
4 Star State; and

5 WHEREAS, This region of rolling prairie just west of the
6 Brazos River was first inhabited by the Tamique and Xaraname
7 peoples; the French explorer La Salle and his party, who are thought
8 to have passed through the area in the 1680s, may have been the
9 first European visitors; and

10 WHEREAS, In 1821, settlers recruited by Stephen F. Austin
11 began to homestead the region; during the Texas Revolution, the
12 ferry crossing known as Washington-on-the-Brazos became the
13 headquarters of General Sam Houston and the site of the Convention
14 of 1836, which declared the independence of Texas; the town was the
15 capital of the new republic from 1842 to 1845; and

16 WHEREAS, Washington County was organized in 1837, and Brenham
17 became the county seat in 1844; the county's prospects were
18 improved by the thousands of immigrants from Germany and Poland who
19 arrived during the 1860s and 1870s, and its economy was further
20 spurred by the arrival of the railroad in 1880; in those years,
21 cotton, corn, and poultry were the region's mainstays; and

22 WHEREAS, The area played an important role in the history of
23 higher education in Texas; Baylor University was founded in the
24 county in 1846, and in 1855 Soule University, a precursor to

1 Southwestern University, was founded in Chappell Hill; today, Blinn
2 College in Brenham carries on this proud tradition; and

3 WHEREAS, Washington County's central role in the history of
4 Texas draws visitors from across the state; the Star of the Republic
5 Museum, Independence Hall, and the Barrington Living History Farm
6 at the Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site vividly evoke
7 the years of the Texas Republic; the Chappell Hill Historic
8 District includes a folk art collection, a Masonic cemetery, and a
9 restored Baptist parsonage; the building housing the Brenham
10 Heritage Museum is also a venerable landmark and is listed on the
11 National Register of Historic Places; and

12 WHEREAS, Other popular attractions include the recreation
13 opportunities of Lake Somerville, the eight-acre garden at the
14 Antique Rose Emporium, and the county's scenic country roads; every
15 year, thousands of people take the tour of Blue Bell Creameries,
16 where one of the nation's best-selling brands of ice cream is made;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, Honoring their rich history even as they work to
19 build a bright future, the residents of Washington County have many
20 reasons to be proud of the place they call home; now, therefore, be
21 it

22 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 81st Texas
23 Legislature hereby recognize February 24, 2009, as Washington
24 County Day at the State Capitol and extend to the visiting
25 delegation sincere best wishes for an enjoyable and memorable stay
26 in Austin.