

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 172

WHEREAS, Jim Wells County Day at the State Capitol is being celebrated February 12, 2009, and the Texas Senate takes great pleasure in recognizing this region and its citizens who have contributed to the development of the Lone Star State; and

WHEREAS, In the early 1500s, Alvar Nuñez de Cabeza de Vaca explored the area known today as Jim Wells County, and his records tell of tuna or prickly pear festivals held annually by his coastal Indian captors around the present-day City of Alice; and

WHEREAS, Originally a part of Nueces County, Jim Wells County was created and organized by the Texas Legislature on March 11, 1911, and the City of Alice became the county seat; the county was named for a prominent political figure and land developer, James B. Wells, Jr., who was also the purchasing agent for the King Ranch; and

WHEREAS, The area comprising Jim Wells County figures prominently in the early days of Texas, for the land had become a part of Texas after it gained its independence from Mexico in 1836; and

WHEREAS, N. G. Collins had extensive landholdings in the area before early settlers to the region arrived in 1850; the settlers brought only the barest necessities with them to build a general store and a trading post, creating the town of Collins east of where Alice is now located; the town of Collins was short-lived since the San Antonio and Aransas Pass Railroad was built two miles west of the community when landowners refused to sell the right-of-way through the town; and

WHEREAS, In 1886, a new town developed where two rail lines intersected; after several name changes, the new town of Alice, named for Alice King, began to develop economically; located at that time in the northwestern part of Nueces County, the town eventually became the largest cattle-shipping point in the world; and

WHEREAS, Located in the geographical heart of South Texas, along the "Texas Tropical Trail," Alice is known as the "Hub of South Texas" due to its strategic location at the intersection of State Highway 44 and United States Highway 281; and

WHEREAS, In addition to the oil business, ranching, cattle shipping, and cotton and grain production, a fine public school system, a modern hospital, and an expanding health-related service industry combine to drive the area's economy; and

WHEREAS, Situated on primary United States-Mexico trade routes connecting Laredo and the Rio Grande Valley with the Port of Corpus Christi, the City of Alice and Jim Wells County are developing into a major "Hub of International Trade"; United States Highway 281 has been named in the National Highway System Designation Act of 1995 as a key link in the future I-69 NAFTA Superhighway System; and

WHEREAS, Jim Wells County is a valuable agricultural area that has contributed significantly to the development of the Southwestern part of the United States; since the mid-1800s when the famous Chisholm Trail passed through the county, the cattle

industry has played a major role in its economy; mesquite brush and grasses in the western part provide ideal grazing conditions for livestock, and coastal plains to the east produce coastal Bermuda and vegetables; and

WHEREAS, In 1936, the first notable oil activity in the county was initiated, and the first major oil producer, The Texas Royalty Corporation and Lucy Petroleum Company One, was bought northeast of Alice; the oil rush brought many new families to Jim Wells County; and

WHEREAS, The history of Jim Wells County has been carefully preserved at the South Texas Museum, which has been designated a Texas Historical Landmark; donated by the McGill family, the museum was the family's old ranch headquarters; and

WHEREAS, Proud of their unique heritage, the citizens of Jim Wells County have retained the social fabric of their culture through fiestas, county fairs, rodeos, and outdoor activities such as hunting and water sports; and

WHEREAS, Jim Wells County Day at the State Capitol is an appropriate occasion for the Texas Senate to recognize the residents of Jim Wells County and to commend them for their excellent accomplishments; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 81st Legislature, hereby declare February 12, 2009, Jim Wells County Day at the State Capitol and join the citizens of Jim Wells County as they celebrate their county's many assets; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be prepared for the citizens of Jim Wells County as an expression of esteem from the Texas Senate.

Hinojosa

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on February 10, 2009.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate