

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 42

WHEREAS, The Senate of the State of Texas is pleased to recognize the Multicultural Refugee Coalition and to join the organization in recognizing June 30 as Congolese Independence Day; and

WHEREAS, The Multicultural Refugee Coalition is a nonprofit organization that is based in Austin and works to help area refugees become more self-sufficient and build a community; and

WHEREAS, The coalition offers classes in job skills, computer literacy, driver education, and gardening and sewing; it also has a soccer team and offers resources for conflict resolution; and

WHEREAS, A large portion of the refugees who participate in the coalition's programs are from the Congo region in Africa, which has been devastated by the ongoing conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and

WHEREAS, The conflict has resulted in the deaths of 5.4 million people, the biggest death toll of any conflict since World War II; half of the dead have been children; the average life expectancy is 47 years, and one in five children die before their fifth birthday; and

WHEREAS, The Congolese refugees in Austin are working to build a stronger community for themselves and simultaneously shed light on the most unfortunate situation in the Congo, where more than 200,000 women and girls have been victims of sexual violence, and more than one million people have been forced to flee their homes; the celebration of the independence day of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is an opportunity to express support for its people and share their hopes for a better future; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 82nd Legislature, 1st Called Session, hereby pay tribute to the Multicultural Refugee Coalition for its commendable work to help refugees in Austin and recognize June 30 as Congolese Independence Day; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be prepared for the Congolese refugees in Austin and the Multicultural Refugee Coalition.

Watson

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on June 16, 2011.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate