

By: Naishtat

H.C.R. No. 127

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, The year 2012 marks the 100th anniversary of the
2 birth of Lady Bird Johnson, and that occasion provides a fitting
3 opportunity to remember the former first lady for her tireless
4 efforts to preserve the natural beauty of our state and nation; and

5 WHEREAS, Born on December 22, 1912, in Karnack, the former
6 Claudia Alta Taylor spent many hours of her childhood paddling on
7 Caddo Lake under ancient cypress trees, and those early experiences
8 awakened in her a lifelong love of nature; she earned bachelor's
9 degrees in history and journalism from The University of Texas at
10 Austin and met Lyndon Baines Johnson shortly after graduating; they
11 married on November 17, 1934; and

12 WHEREAS, Mrs. Johnson distinguished herself as a successful
13 businesswoman and political campaigner in the ensuing years; she
14 helped her husband immensely in his bids for a seat in Congress and
15 then in the U.S. Senate; along the way, she became the mother of two
16 daughters, Lynda Bird and Luci Baines; Mrs. Johnson's graceful
17 presence at her husband's side when he was thrust into the
18 presidency in November 1963 after the Kennedy assassination helped
19 to reassure a deeply saddened nation facing an unexpected
20 transition; and

21 WHEREAS, Soon after President Johnson was elected to his
22 first full term in 1964, Mrs. Johnson began her work in the area of
23 conservation and beautification; one of the most important results
24 of her work was the Highway Beautification Act of 1965, which

1 encouraged scenic enhancement and wildflower planting along
2 roadsides, and paved the way for today's requirement that at least
3 one-quarter of one percent of funds spent on landscaping projects
4 in the highway system be used to plant native wildflowers; and

5 WHEREAS, In 1964, Mrs. Johnson sought to make our nation's
6 capital a garden city and a model for the rest of the country,
7 planting flowers on the National Mall and throughout parks in
8 low-income neighborhoods and persuading private businesses to
9 undertake similar efforts; she also focused the country's attention
10 on America's natural treasures by visiting historic sites, national
11 parks, and scenic areas; and

12 WHEREAS, Among the major legislative initiatives passed
13 during the Johnson administration were the Wilderness Act of 1964,
14 the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the Wild and Scenic Rivers
15 program, additions to the National Park system, and 200
16 environmental laws; in a tribute to his wife's work, President
17 Johnson presented her in 1968 with 50 pens used to sign 50 laws
18 related to conservation and beautification; and

19 WHEREAS, After returning to her home state with her husband
20 in 1969, Mrs. Johnson devoted herself to the landscape of Texas; she
21 was a leading force behind the establishment of Austin's hike and
22 bike trail, and for two decades she supported beautification by
23 personally giving awards to districts that used native Texas plants
24 and scenery to the best advantage in their planning; and

25 WHEREAS, With her friend, actress Helen Hayes, Mrs. Johnson
26 founded in 1982 what is now the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center;
27 a component of The University of Texas at Austin, the center is a

1 national leader in research, education, and the development of
2 projects that promote sustainability and the use of native plants
3 that help to conserve water, minimize the use of fertilizers and
4 pesticides, and convey a unique sense of place; the center sponsors
5 a national, voluntary rating system for sustainable landscapes,
6 collects millions of seeds for preservation and restoration, and
7 consults on related issues with corporations, national parks, and
8 urban developments; and

9 WHEREAS, A deeply engaged citizen and visionary, Mrs. Johnson
10 passed away on July 11, 2007, but her legacy lives on in the scenic
11 vistas of wildflowers that line so many of the Lone Star State's
12 roadways, and we, as Texans, are fortunate beneficiaries of her
13 devotion to the natural world; now, therefore, be it

14 RESOLVED, That the 82nd Legislature of the State of Texas
15 hereby designate the year 2012 as the Lady Bird Johnson Centennial
16 Year in observance of the 100th anniversary of the birth of this
17 beloved First Lady.