

1 enhanced her reputation as an evocative public speaker and arose as
2 a leader on issues relating to voting rights, consumer protection,
3 energy, and the environment; and

4 WHEREAS, In her role as a member of the House Committee on the
5 Judiciary, she gained national prominence during the Watergate
6 impeachment proceedings against President Nixon in 1974; speaking
7 before the committee, she movingly portrayed the intention of the
8 framers of the United States Constitution and eloquently expressed
9 her faith in that document, even as she noted that "We the People,"
10 the first words of the preamble to the Constitution, were not
11 originally intended to apply to African Americans; and

12 WHEREAS, In 1976, Congresswoman Jordan became the first
13 female and the first African American to serve as the keynote
14 speaker at the Democratic National Convention, and her speech
15 reiterated her faith in the Constitution and the desire to form a
16 national community that would fulfill the country's purpose of
17 creating and sustaining a society in which all are equal; and

18 WHEREAS, Ms. Jordan retired from elective office in 1979 and
19 became a distinguished professor at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of
20 Public Affairs at The University of Texas at Austin; for the
21 remainder of her life, she focused on mentoring a new generation of
22 aspiring leaders, encouraging them to excel and to commit
23 themselves to public service; and

24 WHEREAS, At the request of President Bill Clinton, she became
25 chair of the United States Commission on Immigration Reform in the
26 mid-1990s and held that office until her death; in 1994, President
27 Clinton honored her for her patriotism and outstanding service by

1 awarding her the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the country's
2 highest civilian honor; and

3 WHEREAS, Barbara Jordan passed away in January 1996, but her
4 lifelong commitment to freedom, integrity, equality, and justice
5 resonates as powerfully today as it did in years past, and she is
6 indeed deserving of special recognition, on the anniversary of her
7 birth, in the state that she served so well; now, therefore, be it

8 RESOLVED, That the 82nd Legislature of the State of Texas
9 hereby designate February 21 through 27 of each year from 2011
10 through 2020 as Barbara Jordan Freedom Week.