

1-1 By: Ellis S.C.R. No. 10
1-2 (In the Senate - Filed January 28, 2011; February 14, 2011,
1-3 read first time and referred to Committee on Administration;
1-4 March 16, 2011, reported favorably by the following vote: Yeas 7,
1-5 Nays 0; March 16, 2011, sent to printer.)

1-6 SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1-7 WHEREAS, The legacy that the Honorable Barbara Jordan
1-8 established in her service to the citizens of Texas and the United
1-9 States of America remains a source of inspiration to countless
1-10 people, and time cannot diminish the contributions of this
1-11 admirable patriot, politician, teacher, mentor, friend, icon, and
1-12 hero; and

1-13 WHEREAS, Born on February 21, 1936, to Benjamin and Arlyne
1-14 Jordan, Barbara Jordan was raised in Houston's Fifth Ward and
1-15 graduated with honors from Phillis Wheatley High School in the
1-16 Houston Independent School District; and

1-17 WHEREAS, Ms. Jordan attended Texas Southern University,
1-18 where she majored in government and history and was a member of the
1-19 debate team, winning numerous honors for her oratory skills; after
1-20 graduating magna cum laude from Texas Southern University, she
1-21 enrolled at the Boston University School of Law and received her law
1-22 degree in 1959; and

1-23 WHEREAS, In 1966, Ms. Jordan became the first black woman
1-24 ever elected to the Texas Senate as well as the first African
1-25 American to be elected as a state senator in the United States since
1-26 1883; and

1-27 WHEREAS, Following her successful run for a seat in the
1-28 United States Congress in 1972, Ms. Jordan served in the House of
1-29 Representatives from 1973 until 1979, during which time she
1-30 enhanced her reputation as an evocative public speaker and arose as
1-31 a leader on issues relating to voting rights, consumer protection,
1-32 energy, and the environment; and

1-33 WHEREAS, In her role as a member of the House Committee on the
1-34 Judiciary, she gained national prominence during the Watergate
1-35 impeachment proceedings against President Nixon in 1974; speaking
1-36 before the committee, she movingly portrayed the intention of the
1-37 framers of the United States Constitution and eloquently expressed
1-38 her faith in that document, even as she noted that "We the People,"
1-39 the first words of the preamble to the Constitution, were not
1-40 originally intended to apply to African Americans; and

1-41 WHEREAS, In 1976, Congresswoman Jordan became the first
1-42 female and the first African American to serve as the keynote
1-43 speaker at the Democratic National Convention, and her speech
1-44 reiterated her faith in the Constitution and the desire to form a
1-45 national community that would fulfill the country's purpose of
1-46 creating and sustaining a society in which all are equal; and

1-47 WHEREAS, Ms. Jordan retired from elective office in 1979 and
1-48 became a distinguished professor at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of
1-49 Public Affairs at The University of Texas at Austin; for the
1-50 remainder of her life, she focused on mentoring a new generation of
1-51 aspiring leaders, encouraging them to excel and to commit
1-52 themselves to public service; and

1-53 WHEREAS, At the request of President Bill Clinton, she became
1-54 chair of the United States Commission on Immigration Reform in the
1-55 mid-1990s and held that office until her death; in 1994, President
1-56 Clinton honored her for her patriotism and outstanding service by
1-57 awarding her the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the country's
1-58 highest civilian honor; and

1-59 WHEREAS, Barbara Jordan passed away in January 1996, but her
1-60 lifelong commitment to freedom, integrity, equality, and justice
1-61 resonates as powerfully today as it did in years past, and she is
1-62 indeed deserving of special recognition, on the anniversary of her
1-63 birth, in the state that she served so well; now, therefore, be it

1-64 RESOLVED, That the 82nd Legislature of the State of Texas

2-1 hereby designate February 21 through 27 of each year from 2011
2-2 through 2020 as Barbara Jordan Freedom Week.

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