

1-1 By: Eiland (Senate Sponsor - Taylor) H.C.R. No. 31
 1-2 (In the Senate - Received from the House April 11, 2013;
 1-3 April 18, 2013, read first time and referred to Committee on
 1-4 Administration; April 29, 2013, reported favorably by the
 1-5 following vote: Yeas 6, Nays 0; April 29, 2013, sent to printer.)

1-6 COMMITTEE VOTE

	Yea	Nay	Absent	PNV
1-7				
1-8	X			
1-9	X			
1-10			X	
1-11	X			
1-12	X			
1-13	X			
1-14	X			

1-15 HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1-16 WHEREAS, The State of Texas traditionally has recognized a
 1-17 variety of official symbols as tangible representations of the
 1-18 proud character and colorful heritage of the Lone Star State; and

1-19 WHEREAS, Select members of the animal kingdom, including the
 1-20 longhorn, the armadillo, and the Texas horned lizard, are among the
 1-21 species that have been formally recognized, and their designation
 1-22 has served to draw attention to the great biological diversity of
 1-23 the state's landscape and to highlight creatures who are unique to
 1-24 or closely identified with the state; and

1-25 WHEREAS, An especially rich natural environment is found
 1-26 along the Texas Gulf Coast, and of the many distinctive species
 1-27 found in that region, the Kemp's ridley sea turtle (*Lepidochelys*
 1-28 *kempii*) is particularly deserving of recognition; and

1-29 WHEREAS, Identifiable by its nearly circular upper shell, the
 1-30 Kemp's ridley makes its home primarily in the Gulf of Mexico, though
 1-31 it is also found in the Atlantic Ocean; after hatching, the male
 1-32 turtles spend their entire lives at sea; the females come ashore
 1-33 only to lay eggs, and they do so in large, synchronized groups, an
 1-34 extraordinary phenomenon known in Spanish as *arribada*, meaning
 1-35 "arrival"; while they are the smallest of the eight types of sea
 1-36 turtles in the world, they can still weigh up to 100 pounds and grow
 1-37 to 2.5 feet in length; and

1-38 WHEREAS, This remarkable creature is part of an inspiring
 1-39 conservation success story; following an alarming population
 1-40 decline that began in the 1940s, the Kemp's ridley teetered on the
 1-41 brink of extinction and was placed on the Endangered Species List in
 1-42 1970; it has made a heroic recovery, however, as a result of a
 1-43 collaborative protection program begun in 1978 by the United States
 1-44 and Mexico; this initiative has helped implement the use of turtle
 1-45 excluder devices by the commercial shrimp fleet, which allow sea
 1-46 turtles to escape the trawling nets that were causing large numbers
 1-47 of deaths; another important development has been the establishment
 1-48 of a secondary nesting colony at Padre Island National Seashore in
 1-49 Texas, which supplements the main nesting site in Mexico; as of
 1-50 2012, more than 100 turtle nests were identified at the national
 1-51 seashore, with another 100 in other Texas coastal areas; and

1-52 WHEREAS, A number of organizations and universities in the
 1-53 state have taken part in the campaign to safeguard the turtles, with
 1-54 Texas A&M University at Galveston, The University of Texas Marine
 1-55 Science Institute, and the National Marine Fisheries Service being
 1-56 central players in the initiative; and

1-57 WHEREAS, Once the most imperiled of all sea turtles, the
 1-58 Kemp's ridley is today becoming a more common resident of the Gulf
 1-59 Coast waters; its comeback is a testament to its resilience and to
 1-60 the admirable work of those Texans who have aided its recovery, and
 1-61 this noble animal is indeed a fitting symbol of the Lone Star State;

2-1 now, therefore, be it
2-2 RESOLVED, That the 83rd Legislature of the State of Texas
2-3 hereby designate the Kemp's ridley sea turtle as the official State
2-4 Sea Turtle of Texas.

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