

By: Guillen

H.R. No. 990

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The Texas Historical Commission is celebrating its  
2 60th anniversary in 2013, and this is a fitting opportunity to  
3 recognize the commission for its immeasurable contribution to  
4 preserving the history and heritage of the Lone Star State; and

5 WHEREAS, Founded as the Texas State Historical Survey  
6 Committee by the Texas Legislature in 1953, the agency was charged  
7 with sponsoring projects and serving as a clearinghouse to record  
8 and preserve material culture from all phases of Texas history, in  
9 concert with state, regional, and local groups as well as  
10 individuals; it was to accomplish this mission by designating  
11 historic houses, sites, and landmarks, preserving important  
12 documents and artifacts, and publishing and distributing materials  
13 about Texas history; and

14 WHEREAS, The first Texas Historical Marker was placed at Camp  
15 Ford in Tyler in 1962, and that same year, Eggleston House in  
16 Galveston was designated as the first Recorded Texas Historic  
17 Landmark; in 1963, the legislature gave the Survey Committee legal  
18 authority to preserve and protect the heritage of Texas, and it went  
19 on to empower the agency to administer the Office of the State  
20 Archeologist; and

21 WHEREAS, After the U.S. Congress passed the National Historic  
22 Preservation Act in 1966, Governor John Connally made the Survey  
23 Committee responsible for administering the act in Texas, and three  
24 years later, the legislature created the Antiquities Code of Texas

1 and established the Texas Antiquities Committee to protect all  
2 cultural resources within the state; and

3 WHEREAS, In 1973, the name of the Survey Committee was  
4 changed to the Texas Historical Commission, and the legislature  
5 granted the commission additional protective powers and expanded  
6 its leadership role and educational responsibilities; and

7 WHEREAS, The THC created the Texas Main Street Program in  
8 1981, and today it ranks as one of the oldest and largest such  
9 efforts in the nation; this initiative has played a crucial role in  
10 the restoration and revitalization of the downtown area in more  
11 than 80 Texas communities, 67 of which recently received national  
12 recognition for their progress; each year, the First Lady of Texas  
13 personally welcomes each new Main Street City into the program; and

14 WHEREAS, In 1995, the duties of the Texas Antiquities  
15 Committee were transferred to the commission, and that same year,  
16 THC archeologists made a spectacular discovery when they found the  
17 17th-century French explorer Robert de La Salle's sunken ship, *La*  
18 *Belle*, in Matagorda Bay; thanks to a special appropriation of \$1.7  
19 million, nearly two million artifacts were recovered from the site,  
20 and today the hull of the ship is being prepared for display at the  
21 Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum; and

22 WHEREAS, The THC was granted oversight authority for the  
23 Governor's Mansion in Austin in 1998, and that same year the Texas  
24 preservation trust fund was established; also in 1998, the  
25 commission launched its Texas Heritage Trails Program with the  
26 inauguration of the Texas Forts Trail Region; now encompassing 10  
27 heritage regions, all centered on a scenic driving trail, this

1 program was recognized with the Preserve America Presidential Award  
2 in 2005; and

3 WHEREAS, In 1999, the legislature provided \$50 million to the  
4 THC to restore historic county courthouses, and 83 counties have  
5 participated in this award-winning program, which has generated  
6 nearly 10,000 jobs, \$269 million in income, and more than \$367  
7 million in gross state product; in addition, 18 historic sites were  
8 transferred from the Parks and Wildlife Department to the THC in  
9 2007; with the aid of a \$34 million bond issue, the commission has  
10 restored several of those sites, resulting in a six percent  
11 increase in visitors; in 2009, the THC joined with the Texas  
12 Department of Transportation to create the Historic Highways  
13 program; and

14 WHEREAS, For six decades, the Texas Historical Commission has  
15 provided an invaluable service to the people of Texas, recording  
16 our heritage, preserving our landmarks, and drawing national and  
17 international attention to the real people and real stories that  
18 make up the rich history of the Lone Star State; now, therefore, be  
19 it

20 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 83rd Texas  
21 Legislature hereby commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Texas  
22 Historical Commission and extend to the commission's staff sincere  
23 best wishes for continued success with its important work; and, be  
24 it further

25 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
26 prepared for the commission as an expression of high regard by the  
27 Texas House of Representatives.