

By: Price

H.R. No. 2827

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, Each year, Texans join in celebrating the Fourth of  
2 July in honor of the day America's founders adopted one of the  
3 landmark documents of modern history, the Declaration of  
4 Independence; and

5           WHEREAS, When Richard Henry Lee, a delegate to the Second  
6 Continental Congress from Virginia, introduced a resolution on June  
7 7, 1776, declaring that the 13 colonies "are, and of right ought to  
8 be, free and independent States," blood had already been shed  
9 between American militiamen and British soldiers; a year earlier,  
10 in April 1775, the British general Thomas Gage had received orders  
11 to use force to suppress rebellion among the colonists and had sent  
12 troops to seize a weapons depot in Concord, Massachusetts; learning  
13 of the British plans, Paul Revere had ridden out from Boston to  
14 spread the word of the redcoats' advance, and militiamen and  
15 British troops had clashed, first at Lexington and then at Concord,  
16 where the Americans prevailed in a fierce skirmish at North Bridge;  
17 on their march back to Boston, the British had been fired upon  
18 relentlessly by the colonials, and General Gage had to send 1,500  
19 additional men to prevent their being overwhelmed; and

20           WHEREAS, Two months later, in June 1775, the first major  
21 action between American and British troops took place when more  
22 than 2,000 British soldiers charged militiamen dug in on high  
23 ground overlooking Boston; the colonists withstood two assaults  
24 before running out of ammunition and inflicted heavy casualties in

1 what became known as the Battle of Bunker Hill; and

2 WHEREAS, With Britain intent on bringing the colonists to  
3 heel, sentiment in favor of independence continued to grow; it  
4 received additional impetus with the publication in January 1776 of  
5 Thomas Paine's pamphlet *Common Sense*, which made an impassioned  
6 argument for casting off the fetters of a corrupt monarchy; the  
7 tract quickly sold some 150,000 copies; and

8 WHEREAS, By July, many members of the Continental Congress  
9 believed that the bond with Great Britain should be dissolved; a  
10 vote on Lee's resolution to that effect was postponed, however, and  
11 a committee was appointed to draft a justification for such a  
12 fateful step; the committee, in turn, chose Thomas Jefferson, a  
13 33-year-old delegate from Virginia, to compose the document;  
14 finally, on July 2, representatives approved Lee's resolution and  
15 two days later, on July 4, they adopted the Declaration of  
16 Independence; and

17 WHEREAS, The American Revolution would continue for another  
18 five long years and would demand much of the patriots; the tenacity  
19 of the troops who camped with General George Washington at Valley  
20 Forge during the winter of 1777-1778, when disease ravaged their  
21 ranks and food remained scarce for months, has come to symbolize  
22 their unyielding resolve; finally, in October 1781, American troops  
23 and their French allies succeeded in forcing the surrender of the  
24 besieged British army at Yorktown and the war was effectively won;  
25 and

26 WHEREAS, The official tally of American military personnel  
27 killed in the War for Independence stands at nearly 4,500, with more

1 than 6,000 wounded; altogether, it is believed that one percent of  
2 the American population died during the war, a figure that would  
3 translate today to a loss of more than 3 million individuals; and

4         WHEREAS, The revolutionary generation encompassed military  
5 and political leaders of remarkable skill, as well as countless  
6 common folk whose devotion to the cause was crucial to its success;  
7 perhaps no one represents the ordinary patriot more vividly in the  
8 popular mind than Betsy Ross, the Philadelphia seamstress who came  
9 to be credited with creating the first flag to bear the stars and  
10 stripes, following a design that she received from George  
11 Washington in 1776; and

12         WHEREAS, That venerable flag, now bearing 50 bright stars,  
13 will grace innumerable Fourth of July celebrations as Americans  
14 celebrate the 238th anniversary of this country's founding; on that  
15 day, along with their fellow citizens across the nation, Texans  
16 will gather to give thanks for the blessing of self-government and  
17 to affirm anew the fundamental principles of liberty, equality, and  
18 self-determination, principles expressed so eloquently in a  
19 document that continues to inspire people around the world; now,  
20 therefore, be it

21         RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 83rd Texas  
22 Legislature hereby commemorate the Fourth of July, 2014.