

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 309

WHEREAS, Proud residents of Port Aransas are gathering in Austin to celebrate Port Aransas Day at the State Capitol on March 5, 2013; and

WHEREAS, The town's location on Mustang Island was first inhabited by the Karankawa Indians, and in the early 1800s, it was frequented by the famed buccaneer Jean Lafitte; the natural passage between the island and St. Joseph Island was originally named Aranzazu and later became known as Aransas Pass; and

WHEREAS, In 1855, an English sheep and cattle rancher named Robert A. Mercer built a cabin on Mustang Island at the site that later became the town; Elihu Harrison Ropes started a project to dig a channel across the island in 1890, and the community that grew around the new post office was called Ropesville; in 1896, it was renamed Tarpon to highlight the island's fine fishing, and in 1911, the town was officially designated as Port Aransas; and

WHEREAS, Since World War II, the city has become one of the most popular resort destinations on the Texas Gulf Coast; the superb beaches of nearby Mustang Island State Park draw campers, swimmers, and surfers from across the Lone Star State, and the town's launching ramps and four lighted piers enable anglers to catch a wide diversity of fish, including red snapper, shark, sand trout, tuna, and bonito; and

WHEREAS, Port Aransas is also one of the top bird-watching destinations in the nation, and the Leonabelle Turnbull Birding Center, the Port Aransas Wetlands Habitat Park, and other nature centers afford fine opportunities to view local species such as herons and roseate spoonbills as well as the annual migrations of hummingbirds, flycatchers, and orioles; and

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WHEREAS, The rich variety of sea life that resides along the Gulf Coast can be appreciated at the aquariums at The University of Texas Marine Science Institute; visitors also delight in the town's many fine art galleries, shops, seafood restaurants, and hotels, including the historic Tarpon Inn, which has hosted such famous visitors as President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and movie star Hedy Lamarr; and

WHEREAS, Blessed with natural beauty and a colorful history, Port Aransas is one of the jewels of the Lone Star State, and its citizens may indeed take great pride in their heritage and ongoing achievements; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 83rd Legislature, hereby recognize March 5, 2013, as Port Aransas Day at the State Capitol and extend to the visiting delegation sincere best wishes for a meaningful and memorable visit to Austin.

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President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on February 25, 2013.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate