

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 341

**WHEREAS**, The Senate of the State of Texas is pleased to join the citizens of Austin County in celebrating March 6, 2013, as Austin County Day at the State Capitol; and

**WHEREAS**, This occasion provides a fitting opportunity to recognize the county's outstanding contributions to the building of the Lone Star State; and

**WHEREAS**, American settlement in the county dates to the early 1820s, when the area became part of Stephen F. Austin's first colony; the first town to be established was San Felipe de Austin, which served as the administrative seat of the colony and as a social, cultural, and commercial center; and

**WHEREAS**, Austin County was created by the Constitution of 1836 and was formally organized by 1837; San Felipe was the county seat until 1848, when the county government was moved to Bellville; and

**WHEREAS**, Blessed with an abundance of water, grassland, and forests, the county drew a steady stream of settlers, most of whom were engaged in agriculture; a number of towns grew substantially during the 19th century, including Bellville and Wallis and the railroad towns of Sealy and Kenney; and

**WHEREAS**, Pushed by difficult social and political circumstances at home and pulled by glowing accounts of life in Texas, many German immigrants came to settle in Austin County during the 1800s; for recreational and civic purposes, they organized singing, literary, dramatic, and political clubs, as well as one of the oldest agrarian groups in the state, the Cat Spring Agricultural Society; German communities in the county include Industry, Cat Spring, Millheim, New Ulm, Shelby, Welcome, Nelsonville, and Bleiblerville; and

**WHEREAS**, Austin County also proved attractive to immigrants from Czechoslovakia, who began settling there in sizable numbers after the Civil War and who continued to arrive until after the turn of the 20th century; like the Germans, they organized much of their social life around various societies, which still play a vital role in the communities, and they were largely responsible for the establishment of the community of Frydek; and

**WHEREAS**, Following the Civil War, African Americans set about creating their own social and religious institutions in the county; in addition to the fundamental role they played in developing the county's agricultural base, they also worked by the hundreds on building the railroad lines that entered the area in the latter part of the 1800s; and

**WHEREAS**, In the 20th century, the cultural mosaic of the county was further enriched by the arrival of immigrants from Mexico, who in the 1900s were the largest foreign-born group to settle there; and

**WHEREAS**, Among the prominent Texans who have resided in Austin County have been Gail Borden, Jr., a surveyor and newspaper publisher who later invented a successful process for condensing milk; another early citizen, Robert Justus Kleberg, fought in the Battle of San Jacinto, held several prestigious public offices, and in 1885 saw his youngest son become head of the King Ranch; and

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**WHEREAS**, Today, visitors and residents alike can explore the county's rich heritage, preserved at the San Felipe de Austin State Historic Site and in rural communities throughout the area, and can enjoy hunting and fishing and special recreational events throughout the area; and

**WHEREAS**, The citizens of Austin County should indeed take pride in their notable history as they look forward to a future filled with promise; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 83rd Legislature, hereby recognize March 6, 2013, as Austin County Day and extend to the visiting delegation a warm welcome to the State Capitol; and, be it further

**RESOLVED**, That a copy of this Resolution be prepared for the delegation in honor of Austin County Day.

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President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on March 4, 2013.

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Secretary of the Senate

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Member, Texas Senate