

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 384

WHEREAS, The people of the Mount Tabor Indian Community of East Texas, whose history in this state spans 170 years, take enormous pride in the rich heritage that they share; and

WHEREAS, Composed of individuals of Cherokee, Yowani Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Muscogee-Creek ancestry, the Mount Tabor community traces its origins to about the year 1845, when a party of families led by John Adair Bell immigrated to Texas and settled approximately six miles south of present-day Kilgore; the community came to be known as Mount Tabor after the name of the plantation that Mr. Bell established in Rusk County; during the Civil War, the Mount Tabor community swelled with an influx of Cherokee who were supportive of the Confederacy and who were fleeing the fighting in Indian Territory; among their number were the wife and children of Confederate general Stand Watie; following the end of the war, residents of Mount Tabor began to disperse; a number returned to the Cherokee Nation in Indian Territory, but many descendants of the early settlers continue to live in Rusk and Smith Counties; and

WHEREAS, Those associated with Mount Tabor have maintained ties to a tribal organization since the community's inception; today, the Texas Band of Cherokee Indians of the Mount Tabor Indian Community is a continuation of the Texas Cherokees and Associated Bands, which was organized in 1871 by Colonel William Penn Adair; in addition to John Adair Bell and William Penn Adair, notable leaders of the community have included Chief Chicken Trotter, also known as Devereaux Jarrett Bell, who signed the 1843 Treaty of Birds Fort on behalf of the Cherokee, and, in the 20th century, chairs of the Texas Cherokees and Associated Bands W. W. Keeler, who served as principal chief of the Cherokee Nation and as chief executive officer of Phillips Petroleum Company, and Foster T. Bean, who served as mayor of Kilgore for more than 20 years; and

WHEREAS, The original settlers of Mount Tabor and their descendants have contributed in myriad ways to their communities, their state, and their nation; they have worn the uniform of every branch of this country's armed forces and taken part in every conflict from the Civil War to Iraq and Afghanistan; in civilian life, they have served in roles ranging from police officers and judges to ministers and school teachers; and

WHEREAS, Throughout its history, Texas has drawn strength from the great diversity of its people and cultures, and it is a privilege to recognize the Mount Tabor Indian Community for the indelible imprint it has made on the Lone Star State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 84th Legislature, hereby pay tribute to the Mount Tabor Indian Community for its many contributions to the development of this state and extend to its members sincere best wishes for the future; and, be it further

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RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be prepared for the Mount Tabor Indian Community as an expression of high regard from the Texas Senate.

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President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on March 17, 2015.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate