

By: Giddings

H.R. No. 34

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Each year, the date of July 18 is recognized as
2 Nelson Mandela International Day, providing a welcome opportunity
3 to celebrate the life of a courageous and inspirational figure who
4 is revered around the globe; and

5 WHEREAS, Born into the Tembu tribe in the Transkei region of
6 South Africa in 1918, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela earned a degree
7 from University College of Fort Hare and studied law at the
8 University of Witwatersrand; and

9 WHEREAS, In 1944, Mr. Mandela joined the African National
10 Congress, and he soon became actively engaged in resistance against
11 the racist apartheid policies of South Africa's ruling National
12 Party; as part of that effort, he helped launch the "Defiance"
13 campaign of civil disobedience in 1952; the government responded by
14 trying him for treason in the late 1950s, though he was ultimately
15 acquitted of that charge; and

16 WHEREAS, After the Sharpeville Massacre of 69 anti-apartheid
17 protestors in 1960, the ANC was banned, and Mr. Mandela began
18 advocating for armed resistance to the government; arrested in
19 1962, he was sentenced to five years of hard labor, and in a
20 separate trial that began the following year, he was sentenced to
21 life in prison; and

22 WHEREAS, From 1964 to 1982, Mr. Mandela was jailed in a small
23 cell on Robben Island, off the coast of Cape Town, and he was later
24 incarcerated at two prisons on the mainland; during his 25 years as

1 a prisoner, he endured harsh conditions while steadfastly refusing
2 to compromise his belief in justice and equal rights for all South
3 Africans; his valiant stand helped strengthen opposition to
4 apartheid, both within South Africa and around the world; and

5 WHEREAS, The anti-apartheid movement achieved one of its
6 greatest victories in 1990, when Mr. Mandela was released from
7 prison, and he soon became a key figure in the negotiations to
8 dismantle the country's unjust system of government; he received
9 the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993, and the following year he was elected
10 as South Africa's president in the nation's first multiracial
11 election; and

12 WHEREAS, In 2009, the General Assembly of the United Nations
13 voted unanimously to commemorate his birthday each year as Nelson
14 Mandela International Day; this observance emphasizes the ability
15 of individuals to effect positive change in their communities, and
16 it serves as a continuing reminder of the legacy of Mr. Mandela, who
17 passed away on December 5, 2013, at the age of 95; and

18 WHEREAS, Over the course of his life, Nelson Mandela followed
19 a difficult and often lonely path in the pursuit of justice;
20 starting as an idealistic student determined to make his country a
21 better place, he went on to become a resolute and determined
22 prisoner of conscience and, finally, an admired international
23 figure who symbolizes the victory of freedom over oppression; now,
24 therefore, be it

25 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 85th Texas
26 Legislature, 1st Called Session, hereby recognize July 18, 2017, as
27 Nelson Mandela International Day.