

By: Anchia

H.C.R. No. 33

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, After more than five decades of diplomatic tensions,
2 the United States and Cuba began to normalize relations in December
3 2014, and this process is opening the way for economic opportunity
4 and other advancements benefiting our state and nation; and

5 WHEREAS, Economists, government officials, business leaders,
6 and scholars all recognize that U.S. and Cuban markets are
7 complementary, with natural trade ties; in fact, Cuba was once a
8 major trading partner, and before the imposition of initial
9 U.S. restrictions in 1960, it ranked as our nation's
10 seventh-largest export market; and

11 WHEREAS, A 2016 report by the United States International
12 Trade Commission found that restrictions on trade with Cuba and
13 travel to the country had shut U.S. suppliers out of a very valuable
14 market; although Cuban imports of goods totaled \$9.3 billion in
15 2014, imports from the U.S. were valued at a mere \$299 million;
16 *Fortune* magazine in 2015 provided a conservative estimate that the
17 embargo policy was costing the U.S. \$1.2 billion annually, and that
18 lifting the embargo would add 6,000 new U.S. jobs; and

19 WHEREAS, According to the USITC, the agricultural sector
20 stands to recognize enormous gains from the removal of
21 U.S. restrictions on Cuban trade, with exports of wheat alone,
22 projected to increase by almost \$170 million as a result of
23 moderately reduced trade costs; other significant beneficiaries
24 would include the chemicals and chemical products industry,

1 encompassing a wide array of products, from fertilizers and
2 pesticides to paint, soap, and detergents, as well as smaller
3 industries, such as paper products and office and computing
4 machinery; overall, the USITC anticipates that U.S. manufactured
5 goods exports to Cuba could increase to more than \$1.2 billion; and

6 WHEREAS, The end of trade restrictions would not only
7 strengthen the economy and boost job creation, but it also would
8 allow U.S. residents to access certain medical advances available
9 in Cuba, including breakthroughs in oncology and new medications
10 such as Heberprot-P, which aids in the treatment of
11 diabetes-related conditions; and

12 WHEREAS, The United States and Cuba reopened their embassies
13 in each other's capitals in 2015, signaling the restoration of full
14 diplomatic ties; in August 2016, commercial airlines began offering
15 service between the U.S. and Cuba for the first time in over a half
16 century, and new rules now permit a variety of economic activity,
17 including banking transactions, investment by U.S. companies in
18 some small businesses, and shipment of building materials to
19 private Cuban firms; Congress has not yet lifted other economic
20 sanctions, however, and delays in the full renewal of trade
21 relations are permitting other countries to reap the benefits of
22 doing business in Cuba; and

23 WHEREAS, The lifting of the trade embargo against Cuba will
24 reopen an important market less than 100 miles from our shores and
25 create tremendous economic opportunities for American citizens;
26 now, therefore, be it

27 RESOLVED, That the 85th Legislature of the State of Texas

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1 hereby respectfully urge the United States Congress to consider the
2 removal of trade, financial, and travel restrictions relating to
3 Cuba; and, be it further

4 RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward official
5 copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, to
6 the president of the Senate and the speaker of the House of
7 Representatives of the United States Congress, and to all the
8 members of the Texas delegation to Congress with the request that
9 this resolution be entered in the Congressional Record as a
10 memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.