

By: Pickett

H.C.R. No. 124

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, The year 2017 marks the 100th anniversary of the
2 first license plate issued by the State of Texas; and

3 WHEREAS, Introduced in 1917, state-issued license plates
4 were originally made of sheet iron and featured embossed numbers
5 painted white on a dark blue background, with the abbreviation
6 "TEX" on the right-hand side; before that time, Texans were
7 responsible for obtaining their own license plates, which could be
8 either homemade or purchased from such places as saddle and
9 blacksmith shops; and

10 WHEREAS, The state prison system began manufacturing license
11 plates in 1935, and the Texas Department of Criminal Justice
12 estimates that by 2016, inmates had created some 650 million
13 plates; in 1965, the Texas Highway Department, now known as the
14 Texas Department of Transportation, started offering personalized
15 vanity plates to the public for an additional fee; and

16 WHEREAS, As technology advanced through the decades, so did
17 the manufacture of Texas license plates; TxDOT began producing
18 digitally printed, vinyl-covered aluminum plates in 2009, and three
19 years later, the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles unveiled the
20 current general-issue plate, which utilizes black type on a white
21 background and holographic security features; the Texas DMV now
22 offers 420 plate designs in addition to the general scheme,
23 including many that honor military veterans; and

24 WHEREAS, Over the past century, as the automobile industry

1 has evolved to become a vital sector of the U.S. economy and a
2 dominant influence on both American society and the national
3 landscape, vehicle license plates have themselves become a
4 ubiquitous, critical element of American life; their sale generates
5 revenue for a variety of state programs, and their role as
6 identifying markers provides essential aid to law enforcement
7 officers in the performance of their work; incidental to their
8 primary function, the plates have achieved a hold on the popular
9 consciousness, becoming collector's items, a means of personal
10 expression, and even a decorative feature, notably in countless
11 roadside diners; and

12 WHEREAS, A humble, unobtrusive object, the license plate
13 serves a number of purposes, from the essential to the whimsical,
14 and it is indeed fitting that this milestone anniversary be
15 recognized; now, therefore, be it

16 RESOLVED, That the 85th Legislature of the State of Texas
17 hereby commemorate the centennial of the first state-issued license
18 plate in the Lone Star State.