

By: Klick

H.C.R. No. 137

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, May 5, 2017, marks the 25th anniversary of the
2 unconventional ratification of the 27th Amendment to the United
3 States Constitution; and

4 WHEREAS, One of the original 12 amendments submitted,
5 pursuant to Article V, to the state legislatures for ratification
6 by the First U.S. Congress, in 1789, the 27th Amendment was crafted
7 by James Madison of Virginia while he served as a member of the U.S.
8 House of Representatives; by the end of 1791, 10 of the 12
9 amendments, known collectively as the Bill of Rights, had been
10 approved by the requisite three-fourths of the states; the other
11 two amendments, one of which pertained to congressional
12 compensation, fell by the wayside; and

13 WHEREAS, The congressional compensation measure stipulated
14 that "No law, varying the compensation for the services of the
15 Senators and Representatives, shall take effect, until an election
16 of Representatives shall have intervened"; the amendment would thus
17 prevent federal lawmakers from immediately benefiting from any pay
18 raise they might give themselves, as every representative--and a
19 third of the senators--would have to win reelection before they
20 could realize a gain; and

21 WHEREAS, In 1982, a student at The University of Texas at
22 Austin, Gregory Watson, learned about this unratified
23 still-pending amendment and concluded that it was eminently
24 relevant, Congress having granted itself a substantial pay raise in

1 1978 and a special tax break in 1981; he determined that the
2 amendment remained viable, and he committed himself to the
3 laborious mission of securing its approval; the amendment gradually
4 garnered wide public support, and with his dedicated efforts, it
5 worked its way through a succession of state legislatures for a
6 decade; on May 5, 1992, Alabama became the 38th state to ratify the
7 centuries-old measure, thus securing its incorporation as the 27th
8 Amendment to the U.S. Constitution some 202 years after it was
9 proposed by a Congress that was conducting its business in New York
10 City; and

11 WHEREAS, A quarter century after its ratification, the 27th
12 Amendment remains the most recent amendment to our nation's
13 constitution, and it is indeed fitting that its unusual history and
14 its significance be recognized; now, therefore, be it

15 RESOLVED, That the 85th Legislature of the State of Texas
16 hereby commemorate the 25th anniversary of the ratification of the
17 27th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.