

By: Murphy

H.R. No. 802

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Each year, St. Patrick's Day is celebrated on March
2 17, and this occasion provides a welcome opportunity to honor the
3 origins of the event and to highlight the many contributions that
4 individuals of Irish descent have made to the Lone Star State; and

5 WHEREAS, Born into a wealthy Romano-British family in the 4th
6 century, St. Patrick was kidnapped at the age of 16 by Irish raiders
7 and taken captive to the Emerald Isle; according to his writings,
8 divine intervention allowed him to escape, and he entered the
9 priesthood soon after; he later returned to Ireland and spent
10 nearly 30 years teaching the island's residents about his faith,
11 thereby becoming the principal champion of Irish Christianity in
12 legend and folklore; St. Patrick's Day, which commemorates the day
13 of his death in 461, has become a celebration of Irish heritage
14 around the world, and in recent decades the government of Ireland
15 has made the observance a centerpiece of its efforts to showcase the
16 country and its culture; and

17 WHEREAS, One of the earliest Irish residents of Texas was
18 Hugh O'Connor, who served as governor of the Spanish territory from
19 1767 to 1770; natives of Ireland also played a central role in the
20 settlement of Texas in the early 1800s, including empresarios James
21 McGloin, John McMullen, and James Power, who brought dozens of
22 Irish families to South Texas and the Gulf Coast; and

23 WHEREAS, All three of these men participated in the Texas
24 Revolution, as did Irishmen such as John Joseph Linn, Francis Moore

1 Jr., and Thomas William Ward; a dozen individuals from the Emerald
2 Isle died defending the Alamo, and 100 Irish-born troops helped win
3 the independence of Texas in the decisive Battle of San Jacinto; and

4 WHEREAS, The number of immigrants from Ireland grew
5 dramatically in the mid-1800s, and several prominent Irish natives
6 made their mark during that period; Samuel McKinney was an early
7 president of Austin College, Father Michael Sheehan established the
8 first Catholic church in Austin and became one of the first
9 full-time Catholic chaplains in the U.S. Army, and Peter Gallagher
10 served as a Texas Ranger and helped organize Pecos County; later in
11 the 19th century, Irishman John William Mallet served as the first
12 faculty chair at The University of Texas at Austin, and artist Henry
13 Arthur McArdle produced many famous paintings inspired by Texas
14 history, some of which now hang in the State Capitol; and

15 WHEREAS, Today, Irish culture is celebrated in formal
16 programs such as the Center for Irish Studies at the University of
17 St. Thomas in Houston, as well as in statewide St. Patrick's Day
18 celebrations, and it is appropriate to join in recognizing the
19 significant role that Irish Americans have played in the story of
20 the Lone Star State; now, therefore, be it

21 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 85th Texas
22 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the state's vital Irish heritage
23 and extend Happy St. Patrick's Day wishes to all Irish Americans.