

By: Morrison

H.R. No. 1024

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The 8th annual World Seagrass Day in Aransas Pass is
2 being held on April 7, 2017, to raise awareness of seagrasses and
3 the vital role that they play in coastal ecosystems; and

4 WHEREAS, Seagrasses are submerged flowering plants found in
5 bays, lagoons, and other areas with shallow marine water, including
6 the continental shelf of the Gulf of Mexico; an important indicator
7 species, the grasses provide food and habitat for marine
8 invertebrates, and their ability to sustain fish populations makes
9 them particularly important to Aransas Pass and other communities
10 that rely on commercial and recreational fishing; in addition,
11 seagrasses help to maintain water quality and clarity and stabilize
12 the sea floor, which can lessen the impact of waves and potentially
13 reduce storm damage; and

14 WHEREAS, The self-proclaimed "Seagrass Capital of the
15 World," Aransas Pass partially overlaps with the Redfish Bay State
16 Scientific Area; designated by the Texas Parks and Wildlife
17 Department, this area features around 50 miles of prime fishing
18 habitat and 14,000 acres of submerged seagrass beds; since 2006,
19 TPWD has regulated public boating activities in the area to prevent
20 damage to the grasses, and in 2013, the Texas Legislature followed
21 suit by passing House Bill 3279, which requires safe boating
22 practices around all seagrass habitats in Texas coastal waters; and

23 WHEREAS, Aransas Pass and Live Oak Peninsula are home to the
24 Science & Spanish Club Network; this innovative program was started

1 by the Gulf of Mexico Foundation with the goal of developing youth
2 leadership by teaching stewardship of the Gulf of Mexico and the
3 greater Gulf Stream ecosystem; to date, two area campuses, Charlie
4 Marshall Elementary in Aransas Pass and Blaschke-Sheldon
5 Elementary in Ingleside, have been designated Seagrass Savvy
6 Schools by the program, and more are expected to be announced during
7 future World Seagrass Day events; and

8 WHEREAS, By encouraging Texans to be responsible caretakers
9 of seagrasses, the celebration of World Seagrass Day is helping to
10 promote the conservation and biodiversity of our state's precious
11 coastal ecosystems for this and future generations, and all those
12 taking part in this observance are to be commended for supporting
13 this crucial cause; now, therefore, be it

14 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 85th Texas
15 Legislature hereby commemorate the 8th annual World Seagrass Day in
16 Aransas Pass and extend to all those in attendance sincere best
17 wishes for an enjoyable and informative gathering.