

By: Howard

H.R. No. 1183

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, Proud residents of Austin are celebrating one of the  
2 city's distinctive features on May 3, 2017, with the observance of  
3 Moonlight Tower Day; and

4           WHEREAS, In the late 19th century, various designs of  
5 electrical moonlight towers were erected in cities across the  
6 globe, including Detroit, New Orleans, Los Angeles, San Francisco,  
7 and London; Austin civic leaders, looking to light the city's  
8 streets with power from the newly completed Great Granite Dam,  
9 contracted with the Fort Wayne Electric Company to construct  
10 moonlight towers around the city; and

11           WHEREAS, The company built 31 towers in 1894 and 1895, all 165  
12 feet tall with six carbon arc lamps mounted at the top; each tower  
13 was guaranteed to provide enough light to read a watch within a  
14 1,500-foot radius of the structure; the first tower was assembled  
15 in the newly established Hyde Park subdivision, and the others were  
16 strategically placed to illuminate as much of the city as possible;  
17 and

18           WHEREAS, Through the years, nearly half of the towers have  
19 been lost to storms, accidents, and development, but 17 of them  
20 continue to stand and to provide the city with light; officially  
21 designated as state archaeological landmarks in 1970 and added to  
22 the National Register of Historic Places in 1976, they were  
23 prominently featured in the popular film *Dazed and Confused*, and  
24 one of the structures serves as the pivotal center of the annual

1 Zilker Holiday Tree; and

2           WHEREAS, In commemoration of the centennial of the  
3 installation of the towers, Austin Energy, the municipal electric  
4 utility company, thoroughly restored the remaining towers in 1993  
5 at a cost of \$1.3 million; with extraordinary care and expertise,  
6 the company continues to keep the structures fully operational,  
7 adding to the unique spirit of the city; and

8           WHEREAS, Today, Austin is the only city in the world to  
9 feature moonlight towers, which provide a vital link to the rich  
10 history of the community, and it is truly fitting that a day be set  
11 aside to pay tribute to these iconic local landmarks; now,  
12 therefore, be it

13           RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 85th Texas  
14 Legislature hereby recognize May 3, 2017, as Moonlight Tower Day  
15 and encourage residents in Austin and across the Lone Star State to  
16 celebrate this unique element of the Capital City.