

By: White

H.R. No. 1230

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Each October, Americans of Polish ancestry
2 celebrate Polish American Heritage Month, and that observance
3 provides a fitting opportunity to take note of the many
4 contributions the Polish people have made to the history and
5 culture of the Lone Star State; and

6 WHEREAS, In 1818, Polish veterans of the Napoleonic Wars were
7 among the settlers who founded an early colony near Galveston, the
8 Champ d'Asile military camp; after the failure of the Polish
9 uprising against the Russian empire in 1830, other Polish veterans
10 came to America and took part in the Texas Revolution, including
11 Michael Debicki, Francis and Adolph Petruszewicz, John Kornicky,
12 and Joseph Schrusnecki, all of whom died at Goliad, and Felix
13 Wardzinski, who fought at San Jacinto; and

14 WHEREAS, In the 1850s, a Polish Franciscan priest named
15 Father Leopold Moczygemba, who was at that time serving parishes in
16 New Braunfels and Castroville, sent letters home that inspired some
17 100 Polish families to sail to Galveston aboard the *Weser* and settle
18 in Karnes County; here, the town of Panna Maria ("Virgin Mary")
19 became the first permanent Polish colony in the United States and
20 home to the nation's first Polish Catholic church and Polish
21 school; and

22 WHEREAS, During the Civil War, a Polish engineer, Valerian
23 Salkowski, designed the Confederate fortifications at Galveston,
24 and Joseph Cotulla, for whom the county seat of La Salle County is

1 named, served in the First Texas Cavalry of the Union Army; a new
2 wave of immigrants in the 1870s settled in Anderson, Brenham,
3 Bremond, and other towns, and a century later, as Poland's
4 Communist regime was failing, more Poles settled in major urban
5 areas of the state; and

6 WHEREAS, Poles have had a strong influence on the state's
7 arts and culture; the German-Polish artist Carl von Iwonski painted
8 Texas pioneers from the 1850s until the 1870s; Polish musicians
9 helped introduce the polka beat and the accordion that are an
10 integral part of Tex-Mex music, and the Fryderyk Chopin Society of
11 Texas and the Chopin Society of Houston have supported the
12 performance of Polish classical music in the state; moreover, such
13 distinctive Polish cuisine as kielbasa and pierogis are popular
14 items in many parts of the state and particularly at festivals held
15 in Brenham, Bremond, and other communities; and

16 WHEREAS, Thousands of Poles and people of Polish descent have
17 made Texas their home over the past two centuries, and the Lone Star
18 State has benefited immensely from their drive, passion, and
19 ingenuity; now, therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 85th Texas
21 Legislature hereby recognize October 2017 as Polish American
22 Heritage Month in Texas and honor the contributions of Poles and
23 people of Polish descent to our state.