

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 123

WHEREAS, Jim Wells County Day at the State Capitol is being celebrated February 7, 2017, and the Texas Senate takes great pleasure in recognizing this region and its citizens who have contributed to the development of the Lone Star State; and

WHEREAS, In the early 1500s, Alvar Nuñez de Cabeza de Vaca explored the area known today as Jim Wells County, and his records tell of tuna and prickly pear festivals held annually by his coastal Indian captors around the present-day City of Alice; and

WHEREAS, The area figures prominently in the early days of Texas; the land became a part of Texas after it gained its independence from Mexico in 1836; when early settlers to the region arrived in 1850, N. G. Collins already had extensive landholdings in the area and became the namesake for a town established east of where Alice is now located; the town was short-lived, since the San Antonio and Aransas Pass Railroad was built two miles west of the community when landowners refused to sell the right-of-way through the town; and

WHEREAS, In 1886, a new town developed where two rail lines intersected; after several name changes, the new town of Alice, named for Alice King, began to develop economically; located at that time in the northwestern part of Nueces County, the town eventually became the largest cattle-shipping point in the world; and

WHEREAS, Jim Wells County was created and organized by the Texas Legislature on March 11, 1911, and the City of Alice became the county seat; originally a part of Nueces County, the county was named for a prominent political figure and land developer, James B. Wells Jr., who was also the purchasing agent for the King Ranch; and

WHEREAS, Jim Wells County is a valuable agricultural area that has contributed significantly to the development of the southwestern part of the United States; since the mid-1800s, when the famous Chisholm Trail passed through the county, the cattle industry has played a major role in the area's economy; mesquite brush and grasses in the western part provide ideal grazing conditions for livestock, and coastal plains to the east produce coastal Bermuda and vegetables; and

WHEREAS, In 1936, the first notable oil activity in the county was initiated, and the first major oil producer, The Texas Royalty Corporation and Lucy Petroleum Company One, was established northeast of Alice; the oil rush brought many new families to Jim Wells County; and

WHEREAS, The City of Alice is situated in the geographical heart of South Texas and along the "Texas Tropical Trail" and is known as the "Hub of South Texas" due to its strategic location at the intersection of State Highway 44 and United States Highway

281; its proximity to primary United States-Mexico trade routes connecting Laredo and the Rio Grande Valley with the Port of Corpus Christi has contributed to the area's development into a major "Hub of International Trade"; United States Highway 281 was named in the National Highway System Designation Act of 1995 as a key link in the future I-69 NAFTA Superhighway System; and

WHEREAS, The county's economy has benefited not only from the oil business, ranching, cattle shipping, and cotton and grain production, but also from a fine public school system, a modern hospital, and an expanding health-related service industry; and

WHEREAS, The history of Jim Wells County has been carefully preserved at the South Texas Museum, which has been designated a Texas Historical Landmark; donated by the McGill family, the museum was the family's old ranch headquarters; and

WHEREAS, The citizens of Jim Wells County are justifiably proud of their unique heritage and have retained the social fabric of their culture through fiestas, county fairs, rodeos, and outdoor activities such as hunting and water sports; and

WHEREAS, Jim Wells County Day at the State Capitol is an appropriate occasion for the Texas Senate to recognize the residents of Jim Wells County and to commend them for their excellent accomplishments; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 85th Legislature, hereby declare February 7, 2017, Jim Wells County Day at the State Capitol and join the citizens of Jim Wells County as they celebrate their county's many assets; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be prepared for the citizens of Jim Wells County as an expression of esteem from the Texas Senate.

Hinojosa

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on February 7, 2017.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate