

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 230

WHEREAS, Rural telecommunications professionals are gathering in Austin on February 21, 2017, to celebrate their important contributions to the prosperity of the Lone Star State and Small and Rural Incumbent Local Exchange Carriers Day; and

WHEREAS, Nearly 85 percent of Texas is considered rural; encompassing 142 million acres in 172 counties, rural areas in Texas are home to more than 3.2 million people, the largest rural population in the nation; and

WHEREAS, Each year, more than \$200 billion of the state's gross domestic product is generated by such traditionally rural industries as agriculture, forestry, hunting, and oil and gas production, and these enterprises require the latest in modern communications technology; and

WHEREAS, In response to this need, 45 small and rural incumbent local exchange carriers have built and continue to maintain a high-quality telecommunications network that covers the vast majority of the rural areas of the state, including those remote regions that are most expensive to serve; and

WHEREAS, This state-of-the-art network provides critical infrastructure for education, economic development, health care, law enforcement, and border security; in addition, the Small and Rural ILECs support more than 6,300 jobs and are responsible for over \$2.5 billion in direct and indirect economic impact; and

WHEREAS, These local exchange carriers play a vital role in the dynamic economy of Texas in the 21st century, and they are truly deserving of special recognition for their accomplishments and contributions; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 85th Legislature, hereby recognize February 21, 2017, as Small and Rural Incumbent Local Exchange Carriers Day at the State Capitol and extend to the visiting telecommunications professionals sincere best wishes for a productive visit to Austin.

Perry

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on February 21, 2017.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate