

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 243

WHEREAS, The Texas State Aquarium in Corpus Christi is an outstanding institution that is committed to connecting people with nature and to promoting conservation of the Gulf of Mexico; and

WHEREAS, After two decades of planning and fund-raising, the Texas State Aquarium first opened the doors to its original Gulf of Mexico exhibit in 1990; over the years, many new permanent and special exhibits have been introduced that allow spectators to see a live bald eagle, to touch and feed stingrays, to watch Atlantic bottlenose dolphins play, and to get an underwater view of the habitat formed around an oil platform in the gulf; the aquarium also features a splash park, an artificial fossil dig site for uncovering casts of prehistoric animal bones, and the Hawn Wild Flight Theater, with presentations featuring trained birds; in 2014, it announced an expansion project that will more than double the size of the facilities; and

WHEREAS, In addition to entertaining and delighting visitors, this private, not-for-profit institution gives back to the community through its education and conservation programs; field trips, summer camps, and distance learning empower Texans of all ages to discover more about nature and marine wildlife, while the Second Chances Wildlife Rehabilitation Program provides care for ill or injured shorebirds, birds of prey, marine mammals, and sea turtles and returns them to their natural habitats whenever possible; furthermore, the aquarium coordinates beach cleanups three times a year, fosters awareness of Texas watersheds with its Keepers of the Coast program, and awards grants through its Wildlife Care, Conservation, and Research Fund; and

WHEREAS, The Texas State Aquarium has been honored with numerous accolades, including the Outstanding Public-Private Partnership Award from Mutual of America, the Munson Aquatic Conservation Exhibitory Award from the American Zoo and Aquarium Association, and the Conservation and Environmental Stewardship Award for Public Awareness from the Coastal Bend Bays Foundation; in 2014, it became one of only six aquariums in the nation to earn a prestigious four-star rating from Charity Navigator; and

WHEREAS, By encouraging Texans to appreciate the diversity and vulnerability of marine life, the aquarium is making a significant contribution to the Lone Star State, and the efforts and achievements of all involved in this worthy endeavor indeed merit special commendation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 85th Legislature, hereby recognize February 21, 2017, as Texas State Aquarium Day and extend to all those associated with the aquarium sincere best wishes for continued success; and, be it further

S.R. No. 243

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be prepared for the Texas State Aquarium as an expression of high regard from the Texas Senate.

Hinojosa

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