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By:  King of Parker H.R. No. 16

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, For more than 3,000 years, Jerusalem has played a central role in the history and identity of the Jewish people; and

WHEREAS, Jerusalem serves as a cultural and religious inspiration to people around the world; it is the location of the holiest site for the Jewish people, the Temple Mount, as well as the Western Wall, where the faithful come to pray; moreover, the city holds considerable religious significance for Christians and Muslims and has been a pilgrimage site for millennia; and

WHEREAS, The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization has passed a series of anti-Israeli resolutions in recent years regarding Jerusalem, both at the committee level and by the executive board, the governing body of UNESCO; these resolutions attempt to erase or minimize the Jewish and Christian historical and religious ties to Jerusalem, and they unjustly single out our close ally Israel with false accusations and criticism; and

WHEREAS, Numerous archaeological excavations have uncovered antiquities which scientifically reaffirm Jerusalem's historical significance to Judaism and Christianity; Israel's most archaeologically excavated site, the City of David, is believed to be the very site recorded in the Bible upon which King David established the capital of ancient Israel; international delegations of archaeologists from the United States, England, France, and Germany have conducted excavations at the site since 1867, and they have unearthed antiquities from more than 10 different civilizations, including Canaanite, Israelite, Roman, Byzantine, and Persian societies; current excavations of the City of David are carried out under the auspices of the Israel Antiquities Authority and are held to the highest scientific standards; and

WHEREAS, Significant archeological discoveries unearthed from the City of David include the Siloam Inscription, which recounts the preparations made by King Hezekiah of Judah for the impending Assyrian siege against Jerusalem, consistent with the biblical account; clay seal impressions bearing the names of two Judean Government officials who are mentioned in the very same verse in the Bible; the Pool of Siloam, which served during the Second Temple period as a ritual bath for Jewish pilgrims ascending annually to the Temple, which stood atop the Temple Mount; and the Second Temple Pilgrimage Road, which began at the Pool of Siloam and served as the main thoroughfare of Second Temple period Jerusalem and carried hundreds of thousands of people on their annual pilgrimages to the Temple; located within the City of David, the Pilgrimage Road stretches nearly 2,000 feet from the Pool of Siloam to the footsteps of the Western Wall and will be open to visitors upon completion of the excavation; and

WHEREAS, These discoveries affirm the undeniable truth that the City of David, the Western Wall, and the Temple Mount are inextricably linked physically, historically, and symbolically as the bedrock of the connection between the Jewish people and Jerusalem and have been for millennia; and

WHEREAS, The Government of Israel has done commendable work to protect the freedoms of all faiths in Jerusalem and ensure visitors' access to holy sites so that they may worship freely; any past, present, or future efforts at UNESCO to delegitimize Israel through attempts to rewrite and deny the history of Jerusalem should be condemned, and the United States should continue to work with allies to prevent UNESCO from passing biased and unjust anti-Israeli resolutions in the future; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 86th Texas Legislature hereby affirm the historical connection of the Jewish people to the ancient and sacred city of Jerusalem and condemn efforts at the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization to deny Judaism's millennia-old historical, religious, and cultural ties to Jerusalem.