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By:  Murphy H.R. No. 65

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, The Honorable James Collins, Mayor of the City and County of Limerick, is visiting the Texas Capitol on January 16, 2019, and this occasion provides a welcome opportunity to pay tribute to this distinguished guest and to celebrate the many contributions that the people of Ireland have made to Texas over the centuries; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Collins is visiting Texas to establish a formal relationship between the City of Austin and Limerick City and County Council, and he is accompanied by representatives from the University of Limerick, the Limerick Institute of Technology, the Limerick Enterprise Development Partnership, the Limerick Chamber of Commerce, the Limerick Gaelic Athletic Association, and other senior business and community leaders from Ireland; and

WHEREAS, Among the earliest Irish settlers to Texas was Hugo Oconór, who served as governor of Coahuila and Texas from 1767 to 1770; in the early 19th century, Irish-born impresarios James McGloin, John McMullen, and James Power settled Irish families in South Texas and along the Gulf Coast, and a number of Irish took up homesteads in Stephen F. Austin's first colony; at least 15 Irish-born soldiers fought at the Alamo, four Irishmen signed the Texas Declaration of Independence, and a hundred fought with Sam Houston at the Battle of San Jacinto; and

WHEREAS, In the mid-19th century, new arrivals from Ireland helped to build the physical infrastructure and develop the economy and social fabric of the young state; prominent Irish Texans included Samuel McKinney, an early president of Austin College, and Father Michael Sheehan, who established the first Catholic church in Austin; later in the century, John William Mallet served as the first faculty chair at The University of Texas, and the artist Henry Arthur McArdle specialized in paintings based on Texas history, several of which hang in the State Capitol; today, some two million Texans, representing eight percent of the state's population, claim Irish ancestry and are making their mark in both the private and the public sphere; and

WHEREAS, Ireland continues to be a key friend of Texas and a strong economic partner, with trade between the two at record levels; Ireland is among the top 10 foreign investors in the United States, and Irish and Irish-Americans play leading roles in community investment and job creation across the Lone Star State; in recognition of these economic, social, and cultural links, the Irish Government opened a consulate general in Texas in 2015, and it remains the only European Union member with a diplomatic mission located in the state capital; and

WHEREAS, The people of Texas share deep, historical bonds with the people of Ireland, and it is a privilege to recognize those ties and the immeasurable contributions of Irish Texans to the growth and vitality of the Lone Star State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 86th Texas Legislature hereby welcome Mayor James Collins of the City and County of Limerick and the delegation from Ireland to the Texas Capitol and join with them in celebrating the long-standing friendship that exists between Ireland and this State; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be prepared for Mayor Collins as an expression of high regard by the Texas House of Representatives.