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By:  Raymond H.R. No. 121

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, Proud residents of Laredo are gathering in Austin to celebrate Laredo Day at the State Capitol on January 30, 2019; and

WHEREAS, Originally known as San Agustin de Laredo, the city was founded in 1755 as an outpost of the Spanish empire; it later belonged to Mexico, after that country gained independence from Spain in 1821, and nearly two decades later it was named the capital of the short-lived Republic of the Rio Grande; Laredo became part of Texas in 1846 and was subsequently chosen as the county seat of Webb County; and

WHEREAS, From its earliest days, Laredo was an important crossing on the Rio Grande and a trading center for livestock, hides, and wool; its role in international trade expanded with the arrival of the railroad in 1881 and with the development of the Zona Libre, or free trade zone, along the border between the United States and Mexico; its economy was further helped by coal mining, the introduction of onion farming, and the discovery of rich oil and gas fields; and

WHEREAS, Today, this bustling gateway city is the largest inland port along the U.S.-Mexico border and one of the top U.S. Customs districts in the nation, and its diverse economy benefits from the retail, hospitality, import and export, and petroleum industries; the city handles more than a third of all trade between the United States and Mexico; Laredo is also a focus for higher education in the Rio Grande Valley, as the home to Texas A&M International University, two campuses of Laredo Community College, and a regional campus of The University of Texas Health Science Center; and

WHEREAS, Visitors and residents alike may explore such area attractions as the historic San Agustin Cathedral, the Republic of the Rio Grande Museum, and the Laredo Center for the Arts, while 40 blocks of import vendors along San Bernardo Avenue draw shoppers from near and far; in addition, Laredo is home to Washington's Birthday Celebration, a month-long event that includes a carnival, a colonial pageant, a jalapeño festival, and a parade; and

WHEREAS, Boasting a rich heritage and a vibrant international culture, the people of Laredo may indeed take great pride in the role their community continues to play in the story of the Lone Star State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 86th Texas Legislature hereby recognize January 30, 2019, as Laredo Day at the State Capitol and extend to the visiting delegation sincere best wishes for an enjoyable and informative visit to Austin.