86R12456 JGH-D

By:  Israel H.R. No. 545

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, For the past quarter century, the Austin LGBT Chamber of Commerce has been a voice and an advocate for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender business owners of Austin; and

WHEREAS, Originally established in 1994 as the Stonewall Chamber of Commerce, after the Stonewall demonstrations in New York City in 1969, the chamber was renamed the Austin Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce in 1997; it became one of the founding members of the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC) in 2004, and in 2017, it changed its name to the Austin LGBT Chamber of Commerce, in recognition of the contributions of the bisexual and transgender communities to the local economy; and

WHEREAS, Over the years, the Austin chamber has grown in membership and influence; milestones have included the publication of its first magazine, *Forward Austin*, in 2007, its attainment of 300 members in 2009, and the first publication of its quarterly magazine, the *Agenda*, in 2012; it received the Rising Star Chamber of the Year Award from the NGLCC in 2013, and that same year, it was named Best Shop-Local Portal in the *Austin Chronicle*'s Best of Austin poll; and

WHEREAS, In addition, the chamber has become a powerful force for inclusion and diversity in the community; it sponsored its first Pride Parade in Austin in 2001 and continued to host the parade and festival until 2010, drawing more than 50,000 participants each year; on the first day of the 2013 SXSW Interactive Festival, it organized the first #BigGay Kickoff Party, attracting more than 1,500 attendees, and in 2015, it was recognized with the Excellence in Community Impact Award from the NGLCC; and

WHEREAS, Each June, the chamber hosts the Proud! Gala, an annual business awards ceremony and scholarship fund-raiser for LGBT students; over the past year, the chamber has launched an Employee Resource Groups program and created an advocacy committee; it is also one of the founding chambers of the Texas LGBT Chambers of Commerce, a statewide advocacy group that is holding its first legislative day at the State Capitol in 2019; and

WHEREAS, By empowering LGBT businesses and their allies, the Austin LGBT Chamber of Commerce is working to develop a supportive, diverse, and prosperous environment throughout the Capital City; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 86th Texas Legislature hereby honor the Austin LGBT Chamber of Commerce for its first 25 years and extend to the chamber and its members sincere best wishes for continued success; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be prepared for the Austin LGBT Chamber of Commerce as an expression of high regard by the Texas House of Representatives.