

By: Flynn

H.R. No. 712

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Over the course of half a century, Special Olympics
2 Texas has enriched countless lives by introducing individuals with
3 intellectual disabilities to the transformative experience of
4 competing in sports; and

5 WHEREAS, The Special Olympics organization was founded in
6 1963 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, who opened a summer day camp to
7 provide opportunities for children and adults with intellectual
8 disabilities to explore a variety of sports and physical
9 activities; in June 1969, the Texas branch of Special Olympics was
10 established by the association today known as the Arc of Texas, and
11 its first summer games took place at Paul Tyson Stadium in Waco,
12 with 10 track and field events and 350 athletes; and

13 WHEREAS, As participation grew, Special Olympics Texas
14 expanded its competition opportunities; its first-ever winter
15 games were held in Houston in January 1991, and in 2005, Texas was
16 among the states selected to run a pilot program for Young Athletes,
17 a sports play program for children between the ages of two and
18 seven; in June 2019, the organization is observing the 50th
19 anniversary of its founding; and

20 WHEREAS, Today, Special Olympics Texas hosts more than 300
21 events in 22 sports each year, and it has been proud to send
22 delegates to represent Texas and the United States at international
23 games in Greece, Ireland, Japan, China, and other countries; it
24 currently serves more than 58,000 athletes and relies on the vital

1 contributions of over 40,000 volunteers; and

2 WHEREAS, Studies have attested to the myriad benefits of
3 taking part in the Special Olympics, which include improvements in
4 social competence and adaptive skills, work performance,
5 self-esteem, independence, and physical fitness; and

6 WHEREAS, Special Olympics Texas has helped make our state a
7 place where people of all ages and abilities can enjoy a better
8 quality of life through sports training, competition, and volunteer
9 participation, and its outstanding record of service truly merits
10 wide acclaim; now, therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 86th Texas
12 Legislature hereby honor Special Olympics Texas and express thanks
13 to the athletes, coaches, and volunteers who have made the
14 organization the success story that it is today; and, be it further

15 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
16 prepared for Special Olympics Texas as an expression of high regard
17 by the Texas House of Representatives.