

By: Taylor

S.C.R. No. 25

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, The Texas A&M Maritime Academy in Galveston plays an
2 important role in the education of U.S. Coast Guard maritime
3 professionals and in disaster relief, but it lacks a ship of
4 sufficient size to support U.S. waterborne commerce and national
5 security; and

6 WHEREAS, One of only six federally supported schools for
7 aspiring mariners, TAMMA trains future merchant marine officers
8 pursuing a college degree and a Coast Guard license; cadets require
9 six months at sea to earn certification as a third mate or third
10 engineer, but the academy's current training vessel, provided by
11 the Maritime Administration, holds only 50 students; consequently,
12 it has had to turn many applicants away; and

13 WHEREAS, Over the past dozen years, TAMMA has been obliged to
14 send some of its Sea Aggies to other academies for their oceangoing
15 experience; these cadets are placed at a disadvantage for
16 leadership roles, and in summer 2018, none of the other academies
17 were able to accommodate additional students; TAMMA was forced to
18 lease a ship at the cost of \$4 million, of which approximately \$1
19 million was neither covered by student fees nor reimbursed by the
20 federal government; and

21 WHEREAS, Following disasters, marine academy ships are used
22 to provide clinics for victims, generate clean water and
23 electricity, and bring supplies into affected areas; the small ship
24 presently owned by TAMMA was activated to provide humanitarian aid

1 in the wake of Hurricane Harvey, but it could only hold 35 workers
2 from the Federal Emergency Management Agency; Texans impacted by
3 the catastrophe had to wait two weeks for the arrival of other
4 training ships from the East Coast, which were capable of housing
5 600 FEMA employees each; this delay severely affected both civilian
6 lives and the economy of the Houston area, which is home to the
7 nation's second-busiest port; the Gulf Coast is vulnerable to
8 extreme weather, and speedy recovery is essential in a region that
9 generates over \$230 billion annually and encompasses more than 90
10 percent of the nation's oil and gas production; and

11 WHEREAS, The ability to send and receive goods over the water
12 is critical to our economy and national security, but there is
13 already a shortage of trained seafarers; by providing TAMMA with a
14 national security multimission training vessel, the Maritime
15 Administration can ensure that the academy is able to help address
16 the maritime industry's workforce needs, while also improving
17 disaster response readiness in the Gulf Coast region; now,
18 therefore, be it

19 RESOLVED, That the 86th Legislature of the State of Texas
20 hereby respectfully urge the Texas delegation to the United States
21 Congress to express to the U.S. Maritime Administration and the
22 jurisdictional congressional committees the critical need to
23 provide a national security multimission training vessel to the
24 Texas A&M Maritime Academy; and, be it further

25 RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward official
26 copies of this resolution to the members of the Texas delegation to
27 Congress.