

By: Lalani

H.R. No. 86

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Diwali, the festival of lights, is being celebrated
2 across the world by followers of Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism, and
3 Buddhism on November 12, 2023; and

4 WHEREAS, The five-day-long celebration derives its name from
5 the Sanskrit word *dipavali*, meaning "row of lights," and it is one
6 of the largest and most anticipated religious festivals for
7 adherents of the Hindu, Jain, and Sikh faiths; it spans the dark
8 half of the lunar month Ashvina and the light half of the lunar
9 month Karttika, which typically falls in late October and November
10 on the Gregorian calendar; and

11 WHEREAS, While Diwali generally symbolizes the victory of
12 light over darkness, the specific traditions associated with the
13 holiday vary between regions and religions; Hindus customarily
14 light *diyas*, small earthenware lamps filled with oil, on the night
15 of the new moon to welcome the presence of Lakshmi, the goddess of
16 wealth and prosperity; the people of Bengal worship the goddess
17 Kali, while in northern India, the festival celebrates the royal
18 homecoming of Rama to the city of Ayodhya after vanquishing the king
19 of demons; in South India, festivities center around another story
20 of good prevailing over evil, the legend of Krishna's defeat of the
21 demon Narakasura; and

22 WHEREAS, For Sikhs, Diwali commemorates the return of Guru
23 Hargobind, the sixth guru and an important figure in the Sikh faith,
24 from his captivity in the city of Gwalior; Diwali also holds

1 tremendous significance to people of the Jain faith, for whom it
2 represents Mahavira's attainment of nirvana, or complete knowledge
3 and enlightenment; although it is not a major festival of Buddhism,
4 it is celebrated by some Buddhists to honor Emperor Ashoka's
5 conversion to Buddhism in the 3rd century BCE; and

6 WHEREAS, Diwali is a celebration for people of all ages; in
7 many homes, wives perform a series of rituals to bless their
8 husbands with longevity, and husbands present their wives with a
9 special gift to reward their care and devotion; families, friends,
10 and colleagues alike also exchange gifts during Diwali as a gesture
11 of love and affection, and the occasion further includes a feast
12 complete with a variety of desserts; children participate in a
13 range of customs, which include lighting *diyas* and candles and
14 setting off sparklers, and the final day of the festival
15 specifically celebrates the bond shared by brothers and sisters;
16 and

17 WHEREAS, Every year, the festival of Diwali brings together
18 more than a billion people across the globe in the spirit of joy,
19 unity, and hope for humankind, and it is indeed fitting to
20 acknowledge the profound importance of the holiday to many who
21 reside in our state; now, therefore, be it

22 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 88th Texas
23 Legislature, 3rd Called Session, hereby recognize the festival of
24 Diwali 2023 and extend warmest wishes to all those who are taking
25 part in the observance.