

By: Springer

S.R. No. 70

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Austin College is kicking off the celebration of its
2 175th academic year during the fall 2023 semester; and

3 WHEREAS, The oldest college in Texas operating under its
4 original charter and name, the school was established in Huntsville
5 in 1849 by Dr. Daniel Baker, a Princeton-educated Presbyterian
6 missionary; two presidents of the Republic of Texas, Sam Houston
7 and Anson Jones, served on the original board of trustees; the
8 institution was named after "the Father of Texas,"
9 Stephen F. Austin, and funded by a gift from his sister, Emily; and

10 WHEREAS, Records indicate that the first graduating class in
11 1854 was comprised of two students; the early years were full of
12 challenges, with the Civil War, a rocky economy, and three yellow
13 fever epidemics that swept through the city; as a result, Austin
14 College moved to Sherman in 1876; it began to admit women in 1918,
15 and in 1930, it merged with a women's school, Texas Presbyterian
16 College; and

17 WHEREAS, Beginning in the postwar years, Austin College
18 extensively reviewed the traditional liberal arts curriculum and
19 explored innovations; in 1972, it adopted a comprehensive
20 educational program that has continued to shape much of the
21 academic development in the ensuing years; the next decade brought
22 a new master plan, and iconic Sherman Hall underwent a
23 \$1.37 million renovation; and

24 WHEREAS, The college celebrated its sesquicentennial in 1999

1 and signaled its ongoing commitment to progress through a
2 \$120 million campaign; it experienced record enrollment as it
3 continued its tradition of excellence; in 2009, the school welcomed
4 its first female president, Dr. Marjorie Hass, and since 2017, it
5 has been ably led by its 16th president, Steven P. O'Day; the
6 current enrollment of 1,300 includes students from Texas and 13
7 other states, as well as Mexico, Germany, the United Kingdom,
8 Thailand, and Vietnam; while maintaining its covenant relationship
9 with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the campus offers a
10 nonsectarian education that fosters understanding of the world's
11 many religious, philosophical, and cultural traditions; and

12 WHEREAS, Throughout its history, this noteworthy institution
13 has provided young scholars with a rich environment for personal
14 and intellectual growth, preparing them to make a positive
15 difference in Texas and the world beyond; now, therefore, be it

16 RESOLVED, That the Senate of the 88th Texas Legislature, 3rd
17 Called Session, hereby commemorate the 175th academic year of
18 Austin College and extend to all those associated with this
19 noteworthy institution sincere best wishes for the future; and, be
20 it further

21 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
22 prepared for the college as an expression of high regard by the
23 Texas Senate.