

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.C.R. 8
By: Parker
Administration
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Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Lone Star State has benefited enormously from the contributions of its Italian American residents.

During the 17th, 18th, and early 19th centuries, the few Italians who came to Texas were mainly explorers, adventurers, or missionaries; Italians began to play a larger role toward the end of the 19th century, when Piedmontese made their homes in Montague County and Sicilians settled in the lower Brazos valley and on the Galveston County mainland; Modenese, Venetians, and Piedmontese worked the coal mines at Thurber, and Italian financier Joseph Telfener brought some 1,200 Lombards to help construct the New York, Texas and Mexican Railway between Victoria and Rosenberg.

Most of the railway builders and coal miners moved back to Italy or on to other places when their work was completed; however, the Italian American community in the Brazos valley fanned out into surrounding areas, and settlements in Houston, Galveston, and San Antonio expanded rapidly; new residents founded churches, newspapers, and benevolent-fraternal organizations, as well as businesses; prominent Italian Americans of the 20th century include bootmaker Sam Lucchese, sculptor Pompeo Coppini, rancher Antonio Mateo Bruni, and agriculturalist-developer Biagio Varisco; the towns of Bruni and Varisco and such names as Bruni Park, Varisco Airport, Liggio Street, and Laneri Avenue are a testament to the achievements of Italian Americans.

Through the years, individuals of Italian descent have excelled in all sectors of our society and economy, enriching our cultural tapestry, enhancing our prosperity, and securing the Lone Star State's reputation as a land of promise and possibility; most recently, Italian Americans have made prominent contributions throughout the state in such areas as aerospace, energy, technology, science, research, and arts and culture, in addition to construction and economic development projects.

June 2 represents an ideal date on which to honor all of those accomplishments, as Italians around the world celebrate this day as Festa della Repubblica to commemorate the 1946 referendum that ended the monarchy in Italy and established a republic and to commemorate over 160 years since the unification of Italy.

RESOLVED

That the 88th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby designate June 2 as Italian Heritage Day.

That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 391.004(d) (relating to a designation of a day, week, or month for recognition expires on the 10th anniversary of the date the legislature finally passes the resolution making the designation), Government Code, this designation remain in effect until the 10th anniversary of the date this resolution is finally passed by the legislature.