

By: Leo Wilson

H.R. No. 56

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Residents of Winnie are gathering at the Texas Rice
2 Festival in Winnie-Stowell Park on October 4, 2025, for the
3 dedication of an Official Texas Historical Marker from the Texas
4 Historical Commission recognizing this venerable annual event; and

5 WHEREAS, First cultivated locally around 1900, rice has long
6 been essential to the regional economy; in 1968, farmers from
7 Chambers, Liberty, and Jefferson Counties joined together to
8 celebrate the rice harvest with a festival, and they obtained a
9 charter for the event in October 1969; the inaugural Rice Festival
10 was held in Winnie on October 3, 1970, and the event has taken place
11 nearly every year since, interrupted only by three hurricanes and
12 the COVID-19 pandemic; and

13 WHEREAS, Over the decades, the festival has become a
14 tremendous success, promoting the industry by drawing thousands of
15 attendees with attractions that include parades, street dances,
16 rice cooking contests, youth pageants, livestock shows, carnivals,
17 art displays, and the recognition of area Farmers of the Year; in
18 addition, crowds have been entertained by the likes of Jerry Jeff
19 Walker, Jerry Lee Lewis, Wayne Toups, Blake Shelton, Lee Greenwood,
20 Mickey Gilley, and the U.S. Navy Band, and the event has hosted such
21 notable guests as Governors Mark White and William P. Clements Jr.
22 and U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Lloyd M. Bentsen; moreover, the
23 festival has demonstrated its support of the community by
24 contributing more than \$1 million in scholarships, donations, and

1 other investments to the area; and

2 WHEREAS, For 55 years, the Texas Rice Festival has brought
3 together residents and visitors alike for a fun-filled weekend of
4 food, music, and entertainment, and the placement of a marker will
5 allow future attendees to further appreciate the community's rich
6 heritage of rice farming; now, therefore, be it

7 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 89th Texas
8 Legislature, 1st Called Session, hereby commemorate the dedication
9 of an Official Texas Historical Marker for the Texas Rice Festival
10 and commend all those involved in securing this designation for
11 their efforts; and, be it further

12 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
13 prepared for the festival organizers as an expression of high
14 regard by the Texas House of Representatives.