

By: Cain

H.R. No. 221

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, February 24, 2025, marks the 189th anniversary of
2 Lieutenant Colonel William Barrett Travis's letter from the Alamo,
3 providing a fitting opportunity to acknowledge the enduring legacy
4 of his request for aid during the fight for Texas independence; and

5 WHEREAS, In 1836, Lieutenant Colonel William B. Travis led
6 150 Texas rebels in their brave stand at the Alamo against the
7 vastly greater forces of Mexican General Antonio López de Santa
8 Anna; on February 24, the second day of the siege, Colonel Travis
9 penned a letter addressed "to the people of Texas and all Americans
10 in the world," conveying that his valiant band was surrounded by a
11 thousand enemy soldiers demanding surrender, and he warned that the
12 fort was under continual bombardment and that enemy numbers were
13 increasing; calling urgently for reinforcements, he acknowledged
14 the grave peril of the situation, closing with the defiant words
15 "Victory or Death"; and

16 WHEREAS, Colonel Travis entrusted the letter to Captain
17 Albert Martin of Gonzales; the following day, Captain Martin passed
18 the dispatch on to Lancelot Smither, who departed for San Felipe on
19 the cold and windy evening; Mr. Smither delivered the missive to
20 the town's citizens committee within 40 hours; although several
21 copies were made, and the letter was published in newspapers as
22 early as March 2, little help reached the defenders of the Alamo;
23 General Santa Anna's troops broke through on March 6, and Colonel
24 Travis died alongside all of his men; and

1 WHEREAS, Shortly after the Texas Revolution, the original
2 letter was presented to the Travis family; a great-grandson of
3 Colonel Travis, John G. Davidson, sold the letter for \$85 in 1893 to
4 the Texas Department of Agriculture, Insurance, Statistics, and
5 History; this was the predecessor agency to the Texas State Library
6 and Archives Commission, which maintains stewardship of the
7 significant artifact today; and

8 WHEREAS, One of the most famous epistles in American history,
9 the William B. Travis letter is a testament to the love of liberty
10 and spirit of sacrifice that exemplified the Texas Revolution, and
11 the noble phrase "Victory or Death" will continue to inspire Texans
12 in generations to come; now, therefore, be it

13 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 89th Texas
14 Legislature hereby commemorate the 189th anniversary of Lieutenant
15 Colonel William B. Travis's letter from the Alamo and commend the
16 Texas State Library and Archives Commission for its preservation;
17 and, be it further

18 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
19 prepared for the commission as an expression of high regard by the
20 Texas House of Representatives.