

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Chief Russell Martin of the Tonkawa Tribe of
2 Oklahoma was welcomed to the State Capitol on February 6, 2025; and

3 WHEREAS, Based on the Chikaskia River in northern Oklahoma
4 since the 1880s, the Tonkawa Tribe maintains a strong connection to
5 its ancestral roots in Central Texas; in its early history, the
6 tribe was composed of a number of warrior, nomadic subtribes that
7 shared a distinct language and hunted buffalo and deer across a
8 region extending west from south Central Texas and western Oklahoma
9 to eastern New Mexico; called "Tonkaweya," meaning "they all stay
10 together," by the Waco tribe, they are known in their own tongue as
11 "Tickanwa-tic," or "real people"; and

12 WHEREAS, The Tonkawa came into conflict with other tribes but
13 offered friendship to Anglo settlers in Texas; when Stephen F.
14 Austin arrived in 1822, he encountered the Tonkawa along the west
15 bank of the Brazos River, and they began trade relations that
16 flourished under Chief Plácido; the Tonkawa aided the colonists as
17 scouts and helped defend the frontier against hostile tribes in the
18 Cherokee War and other conflicts; during the 1840s, the Tonkawa
19 camped in the middle of present-day Austin along Shoal Creek, and
20 they traded with pioneers in Travis County and provided critical
21 support at a perilous juncture; during the Archives War, as Anglo
22 families fled for safety, the Tonkawa protected the city's western
23 edge from Comanche raids; and

24 WHEREAS, Between 1867 and 1874, Tonkawa scouts and trackers

1 worked for the U.S. Army and Texas Rangers at Fort Griffin, fending
2 off the Comanche and Kiowa; despite all their assistance, however,
3 the Tonkawa were not granted any land in Texas; instead, they were
4 exiled and sent on a long journey on the Tonkawa Trail of Tears to
5 Indian Territory in 1884; and

6 WHEREAS, Only a few Tonkawa members reside in Texas today,
7 but Chief Martin, who serves as president of the tribe, has worked
8 tirelessly to strengthen ties to its ancient homeland; in 2023, the
9 Tonkawa purchased and reclaimed a sacred site, Red Mountain, in
10 Milam County, northeast of Austin; Chief Martin and his fellow
11 tribal leaders accepted official acknowledgment of the Tonkawa's
12 foundational contributions by both Travis County and the City of
13 Austin at Tonkawa Friendship Day on September 12, 2024; and

14 WHEREAS, Chief Russell Martin has enriched our knowledge of
15 Texas history by raising awareness of the vital role played by the
16 Tonkawa, and it is truly a pleasure to commemorate his visit to the
17 land of his forebears and pay respect to his people; now, therefore,
18 be it

19 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 89th Texas
20 Legislature hereby honor Chief Russell Martin and extend sincere
21 best wishes for many more occasions to celebrate the proud heritage
22 of the Tonkawa Tribe; and, be it further

23 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
24 prepared for Chief Martin as an expression of high regard by the
25 Texas House of Representatives.

Hinojosa

H.R. No. 684

Speaker of the House

I certify that H.R. No. 684 was adopted by the House on April 17, 2025, by the following vote: Yeas 122, Nays 18, 2 present, not voting.

Chief Clerk of the House