

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 613

WHEREAS, For 75 years, the Texas Legislative Council has provided professional, nonpartisan support to the Texas Legislature and legislative agencies; and

WHEREAS, The council was created by the 51st Legislature in 1949 as part of a growing national movement to establish independent fact-finding and advisory agencies to aid the work of state legislatures; the council's governing body--initially led by the acting president of the Texas Senate and the speaker of the House--held its first organizational meeting on October 19 of that year; inaugural executive director John D. Moseley soon took charge of the agency's operations, and council staff members began their duties in the spring of 1950; and

WHEREAS, In its early years, the agency completed a number of major research projects, including surveys of higher education and taxation in Texas and an inventory of water problems; it also analyzed proposed legislation and processed hundreds of requests for memoranda, bill drafts, and other materials; the drafting of legislation became a more prominent focus beginning with the 56th Regular Session in 1959, as the council adopted the bill-drafting function that had primarily been handled by the Office of the Attorney General in the years prior; today, the drafting of bills and related legislative documents remains an essential responsibility for the agency and is ably managed by the attorneys and support staff of the TLC legal division; in addition, the division oversees the permanent statutory revision program that eliminates invalid, duplicative, and otherwise ineffective provisions, an initiative that began in 1963; and

WHEREAS, The council's oversight of the computer technology used by the Texas Legislature dates back more than a half century; the digital era dawned in the interim between the 62nd Regular Session in 1971 and the 63rd in 1973; TLC staff readied a room at the State Capitol to house mainframe equipment and began the formidable task of applying computerization to the legislative process; the revolutionary developments in information technology in the decades since have made this component of the TLC mission increasingly important, and the information systems division is now the agency's largest; its responsibilities include the maintenance of network infrastructure, the development of applications, and the provision of equipment, software, training, and technical assistance to the legislative community; and

WHEREAS, Legislative research was one of the first tasks undertaken by the council, and by the early 1970s, the agency had established a dedicated research division to oversee this multifaceted area; its staff provide policy research and bill analysis services, perform statistical and demographic research, produce resolutions, publications, and mapping materials, and maintain a number of websites; moreover, the division supports the legislature's redistricting responsibilities and works extensively with the RedAppl district modeling computer system; this innovative resource was developed by council computer programmers with input from the agency's legal and redistricting specialists and was launched in its initial form in 1990; and

WHEREAS, The processing and delivery of the wide variety of print and electronic materials prepared by the council are managed by the document production division; the council's print shop operations date back many decades, and the agency assumed the document processing responsibilities for the Texas House in advance of the 65th Legislature in 1977; by the early 1980s, the

document production division had been established, and today its employees produce thousands of drafts, House official printings, and other documents and publications; in addition to the print shop, the division encompasses the data transcription, proofreading, and document processing personnel that facilitate this essential aspect of the agency's work; and

WHEREAS, Over the course of the council's history, staff have operated out of offices in a number of different Capitol Complex locations, and from the 1950s through 1990s, they often resided in the Texas Capitol itself; the "cozy" surroundings that existed in the statehouse in that era were a frequent topic in council reports, with references to the "elbow-to-elbow" working conditions and "cubbyhole" confines of the building; the agency's oft-voiced request for additional room was finally satisfied with the completion of the Robert E. Johnson Building in 2000, which remains the council's home and also houses other legislative support agencies; and

WHEREAS, Fittingly, the building is named in honor of the legendary Robert E. Johnson, who served as the agency's executive director during a remarkable 17-year tenure from 1963 to 1980 and also held the office of House parliamentarian; through the years, the council has benefited from the skilled leadership of numerous other executive directors, and today that tradition is continued by Jeff Archer with additional guidance provided by assistant executive director Kimberly Shields, general counsel Jon Heining, and chief legislative counsel Brett Ferguson; Kim Shields also oversees the administration division, which encompasses the human resources, accounting and purchasing, and assurance services sections; the agency operates under the supervision of its governing body, which is composed of the lieutenant governor and the speaker of the House as joint chairs as well as six senators, the chair of the House administration committee, and five other state representatives; and

WHEREAS, Since its inception, the Texas Legislative Council has worked tirelessly to ensure that lawmakers have the information, resources, and support they need to most effectively advance the interests of the people of the Lone Star State, and it is indeed fitting that the agency be recognized for its vital contributions; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 89th Legislature, hereby commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Texas Legislative Council and extend to all those associated with the agency sincere appreciation for their outstanding record of public service; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this Resolution be prepared for the council as an expression of high regard from the Texas Senate.

Hughes

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the
above Resolution was adopted by
the Senate on May 31, 2025.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate