

89R11003 BK-D

By: Leo Wilson

H.C.R. No. 50

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The celebration of Mardi Gras has a rich and colorful history in Galveston, where it has become one of the city's most anticipated annual events; and

WHEREAS, The first documented Mardi Gras festivities took place in Galveston in 1867; revelers observed the holiday with events that included a masquerade ball and a performance of William Shakespeare's *Henry IV*, and over the ensuing decades, parades and other larger gatherings began to be introduced; by the 1870s, Mardi Gras in Galveston had evolved into a grander and more organized affair, with krewes such as the Knights of Momus and the Knights of Myth overseeing the planning of parades and balls; and

WHEREAS, During the early decades of the 1900s, various local groups assumed responsibility for coordinating Mardi Gras events, including the Galveston Booster Club, which merged with the Galveston Regional Chamber of Commerce in 1937, beginning the chamber's oversight of the celebration; after festivities went dormant with the onset of World War II, private Mardi Gras gatherings were held by churches, social clubs, and local families, and that practice continued for more than four decades; in 1985,

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businessman and developer George P. Mitchell and his wife, Cynthia Woods Mitchell, led the effort to restore the tradition to its former glory and reinstate Mardi Gras as a citywide extravaganza; and

WHEREAS, Today, Galveston boasts one of the largest Mardi Gras festivals in the country; the celebration spans the two weeks preceding Lent and ends on Fat Tuesday; activities are concentrated in Galveston's historic downtown area, along the beachfront, and on Seawall Boulevard; the observance continues to encompass parades, balcony parties, balls, and other timeless attractions, creating an atmosphere of joy and revelry for those of all ages; and

WHEREAS, For more than 150 years, Galveston has nurtured a rich Mardi Gras culture that is distinctly Texan in spirit, and the enduring popularity of the event attests to the pride and enthusiasm shared by area residents for an institution that is such a vital part of the community's heritage; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the 89th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby designate Galveston as the official Mardi Gras Capital of Texas; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 391.003(e), Government Code, this designation remain in effect until the 10th anniversary of the date this resolution is finally passed by the legislature.