

SENATE JOURNAL

EIGHTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE — REGULAR SESSION

AUSTIN, TEXAS

PROCEEDINGS

NINTH DAY

(Wednesday, February 8, 2023)

The Senate met at 11:11 a.m. pursuant to adjournment and was called to order by the President.

The roll was called and the following Senators were present: Alvarado, Bettencourt, Birdwell, Blanco, Campbell, Creighton, Eckhardt, Flores, Gutierrez, Hall, Hancock, Hinojosa, Huffman, Hughes, Johnson, King, Kolkhorst, LaMantia, Menéndez, Middleton, Miles, Nichols, Parker, Paxton, Perry, Sparks, Springer, West, Whitmire, Zaffirini.

Absent: Schwertner.

The President announced that a quorum of the Senate was present.

The Reverend Daryl Horton, Mount Zion Baptist Church, Austin, offered the invocation as follows:

O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the Earth. On this day, as we begin another Senate session, we pray for wisdom, direction, and discernment. As we gather, let our hearts be filled with love and compassion, one for another. As we gather, let our eyes focus on a vision of equity and access for all Texans. As we gather, let our ears be sensitive to the voice of every constituent we promised to represent. During this session, let us courageously work toward unity and demonstrate through word and deed an authentic example of servant leadership. We pray for our Governor, Lieutenant Governor, every Senator and their family, every staff member, messenger, and volunteer who serves this Senate and our great State of Texas. May all that is done in this house be honorable and bring You glory. It is in the mighty name of Your son I pray. Amen.

Senator Whitmire moved that the reading of the Journal of the proceedings of the previous day be dispensed with and the Journal be approved as printed.

The motion prevailed without objection.

SENATE RESOLUTION 148

Senator West offered the following resolution:

WHEREAS, The Texas Senate takes great pleasure in recognizing Mrs. Opal Lee, the "Grandmother of Juneteenth," who is being honored at the Texas Capitol on February 8, 2023, at a special event to celebrate the unveiling of her portrait, which will be placed on permanent display in the Senate Chamber; and

WHEREAS, Commissioned by the Texas Senate and created by native Texas artist Jess W. Coleman, the portrait of Mrs. Opal Lee honors her remarkable life and achievements and commemorates the indelible mark her contributions have made in the history of our great state and nation; and

WHEREAS, A native Texan born in Marshall and raised in Fort Worth, Mrs. Opal Lee was inspired from an early age to seek to better the world around her and to become an advocate for social justice and civil rights; rising above many of the challenges of racial oppression, she embarked on a career in education, and she became a tireless champion for civil rights and an esteemed community leader whose positive impact is recognized throughout the nation and has been acknowledged around the globe; and

WHEREAS, In 2016, at the age of 89, Mrs. Opal Lee launched a campaign to create a wider awareness across the country about the meaning of Juneteenth, the annual day commemorating the end of slavery in Texas; Mrs. Lee began observing the June 19 holiday while she was still a young girl living in Marshall, and for decades, she has organized events in Fort Worth in celebration of Juneteenth; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Opal Lee long dreamed of making the annual observance of Juneteenth in Texas into a national holiday, and in her efforts to achieve this goal, she spoke to the media and numerous groups about her cause and gathered one-and-a-half million signatures on a petition that she delivered to the United States Congress; and

WHEREAS, In 2021, Mrs. Opal Lee accomplished her mission when legislation designating Juneteenth as a federal holiday was passed; she joined President Joe Biden at the White House to witness the signing of the Juneteenth legislation, and with this historic achievement, the nation gained its first new federal holiday since Martin Luther King Jr. Day was signed into law in 1983; and

WHEREAS, Long admired for her exceptional contributions to her community and state, Mrs. Lee has created an enduring legacy in the State of Texas and in the nation; in 2022, she was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize by 33 members of the United States Congress in recognition of her outstanding efforts in gaining national recognition for Juneteenth; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Opal Lee's steadfast dedication to a vision of liberty and justice is a source of tremendous inspiration to all, and it is indeed fitting that a portrait of her be displayed permanently in the Senate Chamber at the Texas Capitol; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 88th Legislature, hereby pay tribute to Mrs. Opal Lee and extend to her its sincere respect, admiration, and appreciation; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be prepared in honor of this very special occasion.

WEST	HANCOCK	NICHOLS
ALVARADO	HINOJOSA	PARKER
BETTENCOURT	HUFFMAN	PAXTON

BIRDWELL	HUGHES	PERRY
BLANCO	JOHNSON	SCHWERTNER
CAMPBELL	KING	SPARKS
CREIGHTON	KOLKHORST	SPRINGER
ECKHARDT	LAMANTIA	WHITMIRE
FLORES	MENÉNDEZ	ZAFFIRINI
GUTIERREZ	MIDDLETON	
HALL	MILES	

SR 148 was read and was adopted by a rising vote of the Senate.

GUESTS PRESENTED

Senator West, joined by Senators Miles, Menéndez, Bettencourt, Hancock, Whitmire, Middleton, Eckhardt, Huffman, Campbell, Gutierrez, Hughes, and King, was recognized and introduced to the Senate Mrs. Opal Lee accompanied by her son, Joe Roland Jr.; daughter, JoAnn Harris; granddaughter, Dione Sims; and portrait artist, Jess W. Coleman.

The Senate welcomed its guests.

REMARKS ORDERED PRINTED

On motion of Senator Menéndez and by unanimous consent, the remarks regarding **SR 148** were ordered reduced to writing and printed in the *Senate Journal* as follows:

President: Senator West, before you speak, Members, I want you to know, and those in the gallery, this is an historic day. You are a part of history. This is the first new portrait that will be hung in the Texas Senate, I believe, in about 43 years. This does not happen often. It's a great honor. And we will find the right spot for it, to hang this in this, in this Chamber. It's a great day for Texas. Senator West, on your resolution.

Senator West: Thank you very much, Mr. President and Members. And we have members from the House. I'd like to thank the House members for being here, also. And I know Representative Collier, you have constituents down from your district. I want to thank all of you for being here for this historic occasion. Mr. President and Members, today is a very special day in the history of the State Capitol of Texas, nearly 135 years, special day in the month and across America celebrate as Black History Month. Special day because in August 2021, it was decided by the President of the Senate that a portrait would be commissioned in honor of a person whose ideals, commitment, dedication to her cause resulted in the naming of June 19th as a national holiday. It's a special day because Ms. Opal Lee's our own daughter, alright. She is 96 years young, a native Texan, is here with us to smell the roses of a life well lived and be admired. I'm glad to say that every Member of this Senate Chamber signed on to this resolution, so I'm going to ask you at this point, Members, let's stand up and give Ms. Opal Lee a standing ovation. Members, let me tell you a little bit about Ms. Lee's history. Let's see, what Senate, Senator represents Marshall, Texas? Where is he? Where's Hughes? Think Hughes represents Marshall, Texas. She was born in Marshall, Texas, October the 7th, 1926, graduated with a bachelor's degree from Wiley College, Senator Springer, is a, received her master's degree from North Texas State University. We're also joined on the Senate floor by Joe, her son, Roland;

JoAnn Harris, her daughter; Dione Sims, her granddaughter; and Mr. Jess W. Coleman of Prairie View University, who actually did the portrait. We're here today because at this stage in her already remarkable and honorable life, that most of us can only pray that we attain, Ms. Lee doubled down, as one might say, and took on a new mission. And the fact is that I have been at her knees several times having to bend down for her throughout the course of what she's been doing in terms of getting this national holiday. This lady, this beloved educator, community leader, mother, grandmother, in 2016, Members, decided to embark on a trek that only attempted by a few, to literally walk across America. Walk across America from her home in Fort Worth, Texas, to the nation's Capitol on Washington, D.C. to make her case to the Commander in Chief, the President of the United States. She presented a petition signed by 1.5 million Americans who supported the idea that Juneteenth should be recognized as a federal holiday. Thank you for doing that. Over the, over the last few years that I've enjoyed the privilege of joining Ms. Lee for several events in the Dallas and Fort Worth area, I found her to be an absolute delight, full of joy and love and worthy of all the accolades that have come your way. When you look around the Chamber at the portraits, one African American, female, that's Barbara Jordan. I want you to understand the significance of what the leader of our Chamber, working with us, Borris Miles. Former Senator of the Senate District 12, Beverly Powell, was also involved in this. And then, you see that the Members of this Chamber are also involved in this. And so, we want to make certain that you understand and appreciate how important this particular day is in the history of the State of Texas. Your portrait, you're on the portrait of other great Texans around here and will be here in perpetuity. Young people to know the story of Opal Lee as they know the story of so many other persons whose portraits are displayed here in this Chamber. And so, I know that there are other Members, Mr. President, that want to say a few words, and so, I'll yield the floor to those Members at this time.

President: Thank you, Senator West. And thank you for working together with us to make this day happen. And, Senator Miles, you as well, and you're next up. Senator Miles, you're recognized.

Senator Miles: Thank you, Mr. President. It gets no simpler than saying, receiving your roses while you're alive, darling, receiving your roses while you're alive. Being a living legend that young folks can come by, sit on your doorstep, talk to you about the history that you helped form and make and shape in this great State of Texas. Receiving your roses while you're alive, you're a living icon, Ms. Opal Lee, a living icon. And, Members, I'm so proud to join you as we unveil the new portrait honoring Ms. Opal Lee, also known as the godmother of Juneteenth. Ms. Opal Lee will be the second Black Texan to grace these walls along with the great, as Royce West said, Barbara Jordan. Ms. Lee is living proof that one person can change the world. She successfully has campaigned for Juneteenth to become a federal holiday by organizing a 2.5 mile walk around the country. The fact that her push to make Juneteenth a national holiday took hold when she was a ripe age of 89 years old, a ripe age of 89. Think about it, colleagues. Who starts something at 89? Opal Lee. We ought to make that a saying, who starts something at 89? Opal Lee. And showcased her unwaveringly commitment to this historical cause. Ms. Lee, I've called on the Senate to think many times about who we honor on these Chamber's, on these

Chamber walls. My colleague Royce and I have done that. And whether or not they deserve it, it's deserving and honoring for you to be honored on these Chamber walls. Ms. Opal Lee, she is one such individual worthy of distinction. She's an extraordinary woman, Texan, not only for the, for the making of Juneteenth happen, national holiday, but she's also, as well, respected and beloved educator, activist, and community activist. Representation matters. We all know that. Representation matters and having another Black woman on these walls will inspire the next generation of leadership, and I am fortunate, so fortunate, to be a part of this historical making day. Ms. Opal Lee, congratulations. You're truly, truly a walking piece of history and we thank you.

President: Thank you, Senator Miles. So, Ms. Lee, we have a lot of Senators who want to speak. And, Members, I would just say, we welcome all of you to speak, but we really don't want to make her wait too long to see this portrait here, alright. Senator Menéndez, you're recognized.

Senator Menéndez: Thank you, Mr. President. Ms. Opal Lee, I wanted to rise because I did the little research on your journey and we've heard you're a retired teacher, we've heard you're a counselor, you've heard you're an activist, obviously, we've heard that very well. Well, but some people may not realize is how your journey started when your parents moved from Marshall to Fort Worth. And in 1939, they bought a house in a mostly White neighborhood. And apparently, on June the 19th, 1939, about 500 people showed up to protest. You were 12, is what I understand. What amazes me is that you took that traumatic experience, you got your education, four years later graduated from high school before you went on to college. And you turned it around and you decided to help educate people on what Juneteenth meant. That is, was more than just a day off, more than just a festival, the meaning behind it. And so, I just want to rise to say thank you. Thank you for taking a difficult, traumatic experience and making us all better for it. You are a national treasure. Thank you and congratulations.

President: Senator Bettencourt, you're recognized.

Senator Bettencourt: Thank you, Mr. President. I rise to second my colleagues' comment. Opal Lee, you are a national treasure. It's something that we see every day in our colleagues, Senator Miles and Senator West, your absolute determination to get something started at age 89 and to finish it. Because now, this day, June 19th, is known across the country. And as, Mr. President, you mentioned, this is an historic day because what Ms. Lee did was recognize General Order No. 3 that was written by Gordon Granger. He was a Union General. He's credited with saving the Union Army at the Battle of Chickamauga, but he was the General in charge of occupation in Galveston, which is my family's hometown. And he posted an order, it wasn't even read then. But I'm going to read part of the first paragraph because it's very important for the record. General Order No. 3, the people of Texas are informed that in accordance with the proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of personal rights and the rights of property between former masters and slaves. He wrote that six months before the 13th Amendment was ratified for the U.S. Constitution. And he had the same clarity of

simple vision that you did. That this is the day, what it meant, and really, what it meant for all posterity for all Americans. So, Ms. Lee, you are a national treasure and we're proud to have you on these Senate walls. God bless you and your family, too.

President: Thank you, Senator Bettencourt. Senator Hancock, you're recognized.

Senator Hancock: Thank you, Mr. President. Ms. Opal Lee, we thank you, you are our treasure, Tarrant County's treasure. And I don't know that you've been apologized to before. But as a lifelong resident of Tarrant County, let me apologize to you, for not welcoming you the way you should have been welcomed when you first moved to our county. For today, we all know that we are a very special county because of you and because of what you did. And we talk about the big events, your perseverance, your persistence, but you've said many times that you wake up each morning looking what you can do for others. It is how you lived your life. And so, many little things that are not recorded here today and can't be presented on a picture. And it's the little things that you did that changed the lives of so many. What we talk about is the recognition of you allowing us as a country to stop and recognize the day that we finally recognize that under God's eyes we are all created equal. And, Ms. Lee, while we're not, while we're all created equal, God gives certain people special gifts. And to you, He certainly gave a very, very special gift that the people of Texas will be able to recognize and read about and study the history of a very special Tarrant County resident that we are glad you are ours and we're happy to share you with Texas and the Texas Senate in this new portrait. Thank you for what, the big things that you do. Ms. Lee, there are millions out there that experience the little things you did that would like to thank you, as well. We love you. We're glad you joined us.

President: Thank you, Senator. Senator Whitmire, you're recognized.

Senator Whitmire: Thank you, Mr. President and Members. Very difficult to follow you, Senator Hancock. That was a very moving message, as all the messages this morning. Ms. Opal Lee, you and I visited about how do you live to be 96 because I planned on being in the Senate that long. And I want to thank you for being such a role model, not only for good health and clean living, but on a more serious note, about how one person can make such a difference. Quite often, when we speak to town hall meetings and other organizations, we emphasize, we urge people to take up the banner of their causes. And I have seen in my community across Texas, one person can make a difference. But I think you get first prize for certainly demonstrating to all of our constituents, certainly the young people that are listening to us today, one person can shape public policy and make such a difference. Now, let me also let you know I've spent half of my adult life here, 40 years in the Senate. I love this body. I love its Members. If we allowed, Mr. President, all 31 of us would speak this morning. I think it is so appropriate that, first, that our African American colleagues are sponsoring this resolution. It has special meaning. But you have already demonstrated or seen the 31 of us that have co-signed, and I'm impressed with our guests today that have come from all across Texas for other issues have joined in this celebration of this special day. And I thank the audience in the gallery for playing such a vital role to show all Texans recognize your courage and your commitment. Let me close by saying something that you probably don't realize. You're helping heal this body. The issue of who is placed on our walls, photos, is controversial. Some of

them go back far in some of our history that, quite frankly, we're not proud of, some of the issues that you've addressed about recognizing people's freedoms. So, as we sit here and recognize an individual, we've also sent out such a message to this body. And I've witnessed hundreds if not thousands of ceremonies. I don't think there's been one, Ms. Lee, that is more meaningful than the ceremony that we're participating in this morning, because your photo's going to go right up there with presidents and Barbara Jordan, and I had an opportunity to serve with in the, actually she left the Legislature to go to Washington, but she was my Congresswoman. So, you are an icon just as much as anyone on the walls of this body. But what you've really done is brought this Senate together this morning because we join our two African American colleagues in recognizing someone that means so much to the entity of Texas that has been so often overlooked and underserved. So, thank you for your courage in allowing us to have this special day. We need days like this, Ms. Lee. We have so much divisiveness in our society. This is a day that heals a lot of wounds and brings us together, and you're the cause for it. And thank you so much.

President: Thank you, Senator Whitmire. Senator Middleton, you're recognized.

Senator Middleton: Thank you, Mr. President. Members, this is an incredible day today. As we know, General Granger's General Order No. 3 was read, none other than Galveston, Texas, my hometown, and I know Opal Lee has been there many times to celebrate that. And, you know, I think we need to take a moment to think about the history that you have fought for with your grit and tenacity. And by the way, that grit and tenacity is something that should inspire generations to come because it's truly been incredible. And we're celebrating the day that government carried out God's will that all of His children be free. And that's what we're celebrating here today, and that is what you fought for, for so many decades, that we get. It's a debt we can never repay. And you know, you're the Co-chair, I think we need to mention this, Co-chair of the Juneteenth Legacy Project, which the Absolute Equality mural is on 22nd and Strand, which is right about where General Granger read that General Order No. 3. So, millions of tourists a year can see that, to celebrate what you have fought for and the history that you have fought for. And that work is not done, it's never done. Some day, I hope we have a Texas History Museum to Juneteenth. I was meeting with Sam Collins this week, who you know very well, that's been a major inspiration for him, and you've inspired him to continue to lead the charge on that, and hopefully, some day we do have that in the State of Texas, a Juneteenth History Museum. A&M has already come up with plans and some renderings that are, that are outstanding. And I hope to see that come to fruition. But, you know, we also need to talk about the fruits of that day and why we're fighting for this history. So, Matthew Gaines was a State Senator in this Chamber, elected in 1869, and immediately upon being elected, he began fighting to integrate our public schools. So, that's some of the history that we're celebrating. Then, Norris Wright Cuney, there is a monument to him at the old courthouse on 21st Street in Galveston, he was a Sergeant-at-Arms in the Legislature and he was our first African American chairman of the Republican Party of Texas in the 1880s. And you know, we must never allow the history behind Juneteenth and this day of freedom that you have fought to celebrate to fade for our children, for our grandchildren, for our future generations. And there is one here with us today, one here that stood sentinel, that dared greatly, that would not take no for an answer ever,

to allow that day to shine brighter for all of us. Where Juneteenth will never fade thanks to you and your sacrifice and hard work, and this portrait, and also making it a national holiday, which you were told no many, many times, until you were told yes and it passed into law. And that is all thanks to you. So, we can all as a nation celebrate that day of God's will being carried out, that all of God's children are free. And that is a debt we can never repay, but we will be reminded every single day with every vote we take in this Chamber looking at your portrait of what came before us and the sacrifices that were made. God bless you and thank you.

President: Senator Eckhardt, you are recognized.

Senator Eckhardt: Thank you so much, Mr. President, not only for recognizing me but also for the suggestion of having this portrait hang in this Chamber. And thank you so much to Senator Miles and to Senator West for carrying it all the way through to make sure that we were here today to celebrate with you, Ms. Lee. And also, thank you to all of those who came over from the House to celebrate this amazing moment. And all those up in the gallery celebrating this amazing moment, raise your hands high. Ms. Lee, you inspire all of us and you inspire so many more than just those who are here today. Your magical quality of taking oppression and turning it into an opportunity for a bigger love is absolutely mind-blowing. And we are going to be inspired by you today and every day forward, and this portrait is going to remind us that even in the darkest moments of oppression, we can take that struggle and turn it into an opportunity for a bigger love. You are teaching that to us every day. You are the grandmother of Juneteenth, and you've even been nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize in 2022. And the Texas Senate recognition was initially spearheaded by Beverly Powell, who also takes her lessons from you, of looking for adversity as an opportunity for a big love. So, she couldn't be here today because she's raising money for an elementary school in Uvalde. And the citizens of Fort Worth have raised over \$3 million for that effort. That's right in line with what you are teaching us. This portrait will hang in this Chamber as a testament to working together to overcome that kind of adversity. This beautiful portrait, painted by Jess W. Coleman, and it is, by the way, Arts Advocacy Day in the Capitol. So thank you, Jess, for this incredible portrait. It will so strikingly set a difference to the portraits that have traditionally hung in this Chamber. And that striking difference will mean that visitors to this Capitol will say, who is she? I want to know about her. I want to know what her story is. And it will carry your legacy forward. Visitors to the Capitol will learn and reflect on your story and the true story of Black enslavement and oppression in Texas. For too long Juneteenth was a holiday marked by too few, so similar to the overdue revelation of emancipation, the revelation of Juneteenth as a national and state holiday was also overdue. But thanks to you, Ms. Lee, your persistence made it happen. So, I want to use a couple of your quotes from two years ago, because I know that you want to talk. Yeah, I'm hearing the mumbling up there. Right? You said two years ago, We must, must get the stories to the children, got to get the education, we've got to let people know what actually happened so it doesn't happen again, so we can heal from it, so we can get on with the work. We will remember your words when we debate policies to hide that history from our children. You also said, If people can be taught to hate, they can be taught to love. And you are a body of people who can change the

world. Let's all remember that, let's remember your words, we are a body that can change the world, and take a moment, a dark, terrible moment of oppression and turn it into an opportunity for a bigger love. Thank you, Ms. Lee.

President: Thank you, Senator. Senator Huffman, you're recognized.

Senator Huffman: Thank you, Mr. President, Members. And I rise briefly to also congratulate you, Mrs. Lee. As one of the few female Senators on this floor, I was looking around as we were talking about where we're going to hang your portrait, and I realized there are actually very few women at all whose portraits hang on the walls of the Senate. So, when I look at someone like you, my hope, my prayer is that your extraordinary life, your extraordinary contributions to our society, inspire other young women to achieve what you have achieved. And that is a great gift that you are giving as well. So, thank you for being here. And we hope someday there will be other women's portraits hanging on this wall. And I think I'd be remiss, Mr. Coleman, the artist, I've read your bio, it's quite impressive, and I hope that you realize the significant place in history that you will hold as being one of the very few artists who have contributed to this beautiful Chamber. I would venture to say that most of the artists, I'm guessing, are not still alive, who have painted these portraits. So, we welcome you and applaud your significant contribution to history. Thank you, thank you.

President: Thank you, Senator Huffman. Senator Campbell, you're recognized.

Senator Campbell: Thank you, Mr. President. Well, Ms. Opal Lee, I'm confident that influenced by the impacts of your childhood, the historical knowledge that you have, your experience as a teacher and a counselor of children, gave you this vision of Juneteenth. It must be a great comfort, filled with excitement, that you've now accomplished that goal. You have a wonderful spirit, you will, I would say, Job well done, and welcome to the Senate forever. Thank you. Congratulations.

President: Thank you, Senator. Senator Gutierrez, Senator Gutierrez.

Senator Gutierrez: Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you for this time. Ms. Opal Lee, thank you for your attendance. And I want to be brief, Mr. President, I had about five pages of notes here, but I don't want to bore you with all that. But this is really about you and the significance of your actions because it is about actions, it's not words. Almost two years ago, we had a memorial, a resolution for Ms. Opal Lee and for Juneteenth, and this was your suggestion that we do this. Make a portrait to hang on the wall, that's an action you took, and it's a positive action that moves our state forward in a way that I don't, I don't know that many would really, truly understand. But I think that everybody in this room and Ms. Opal Lee understands the great significance of it. And rather than to have any other commentary that I have written down on these notes, Ms. Opal Lee, about some of the other men that are in this room, I don't think that we need to beleaguer the point of the kinds of people that we have, paintings that have been up since 1901, since 1901. There's some great men on this room, and there are some other men that have, at times had some greatness and at times had some very questionable pasts and very questionable comments to say. And so, I think that this body will have time to have that discussion on some other date, today we're here to celebrate you, but it's my hope, because of this action that you

took, that no other Lieutenant Governor has done in over 40 years that is very significant, very significant, Sir, that we begin to have that real discussion about those inconvenient truths. And by the way, most of these men were Democrats. Right? So, it's an inconvenient truth, they no, they don't, they no longer represent the views of my party or of this state. And so, as we move forward, hopefully we'll have the next Opal Lee. Maybe we'll talk about the leaders of tomorrow, the Oscar Mauzy's, the Kay Bailey Hutchinsons, the Rick Perrys, Senfronia Thompsons. Maybe we'll have pictures on these walls that are reflective of this state, reflective of the supreme power of hard work and toil and determination like yours, and be able to have a true discussion as to who we are going forward as Texans. And I look forward to that debate. But I do sincerely thank you, Sir, because this is a moment that is about you, Ms. Lee, that one man who made one suggestion and here it is. And so, for anybody that doesn't think things don't get done in the Texas Legislature, this is a bigger thing than most people will ever realize because it is a message to young people across the world that Brown kids and Black kids and kids of all colors can do great things like you have done in your life. And so, with that, I thank you and I thank you, Sir.

President: Thank you, Senator. Senator Hughes, you're recognized.

Senator Hughes: Mr. President, thank you. Miss Opal, you and I got to visit a couple years ago, course I heard of you before then and it's all been said so well. And you've probably noticed we all want to claim you. Right? We all and all Texans and all Americans can, but I can, because I get to represent Marshall and East Texas where your roots are and your hometown. And, you know, Marshall's proud of you. Harrison County's proud of you. We all are. We're so thankful for you. Over in, over in Romans, Chapter 13, you know the Apostle Paul talks about the role of government, because you know when, of course in America the government, we're the king. The people rule here. The government works for the people. And over in that passage, Paul talks about how of all the things government does, one of the things it does, is it honors those who do well. It pays tribute to those who are worthy of honor. And we get to do that today, every one of us and everybody in this gallery, everybody watching. All of us on behalf of the people of Texas and America get to say, we honor you, we thank you, we just thank the Lord for you. And as I take my seat I'm going to read one of your quotes. I was afraid somebody was going to read this before I got to. But one, your, it captures you so well, and it, and I read somewhere that you said this, and I'm assuming you said this, it sure sounds like you. It says this, I have persistence in my DNA. There's absolutely nothing that I start that I don't want to finish. I've got to finish this. We're so glad you finished this, and we're so glad to honor you today. God bless you. Thank you.

President: We have one more Senator before the unveiling. Senator King, you're recognized.

Senator King: Thank you. Miss Lee, you have absolutely no reason in the world to remember me, and I'll be honest with all the things that've been said, this is such a small thing, and that I was actually hesitant to, to rise and bring it up. But I just wanted to tell you 40 years ago, I was a very young police officer in Fort Worth. And for that year, 2003, I was assigned to work as Mayor Bob Bolen, who you were very close with, Mayor Bob Bolen, as his security for that year. So, wherever he went, I

went for that year. And I know with all the tremendous national impact you've had from city hall and Fort Worth to Washington, I just wanted you to know that if I had to name the people that were leading in our community at that time, there's a very small number that I can recall. And, but I wanted you to know that aside from all the great things and the large things of impact you were doing, that you had a real impact, a real influence on just this young police officer that just happened to be standing over at the side of the, in the corner at the city council meetings or standing at the back at the community engagement meetings. I was there and you influenced me. And I just wanted to thank you for those small things. And I think you have maybe no idea how many of us were standing at the sides, standing at back of the room that you influenced and we still remember that 40 years ago. So, thank you.

President: Thank you, Senator. You know, Members, I think every, and I hope you'll make a motion that all remarks are put into the Journal, but I just, I want to thank all the Members for your thoughtful words and inspiring words. And, Miss Lee, you also began something else after we—I'm coming to you in a moment. I'm coming. Okay. Can I, just let me finish this one word, and then I'll come to you right away—is that, after the decision was made by unanimous consent to hang your portrait in here, we also took the same action to name the first building ever in Austin after an African American. And one of these grand new buildings will be named after Barbara Jordan. That's the first time that's ever happened. Senator Miles.

Senator Miles: Thank you, thank you, Mr. President and colleagues. Mr. President, it's, it's because of you and you being a man of your words. As my colleague Senator Gutierrez brought light to, you spoke on it and you spoke truth to light on this issue that she would be hanging in this, in this Capitol in the next session, and we're here. So, for that, Mr. President, we'd like to give you thanks in being a man of your word and keeping your word and allowing the portrait of Opal Lee Sims to hang in the Senate Chamber. So, colleagues, could we?

President: Senator Miles, it's just simple, when you're inspired by greatness, just do the right thing.

Senator Miles: And the last—

President: We were all inspired that day.

Senator Miles: —and last but, but not least, Senator, it's this that you realize that's diversity. This type of diversity is the strength that Texas carries along with it and all of its history. Thank you, Sir.

President: Thank you, Senator Miles. Thank you. This is a great day for Texas. It's who we are as a people. Senator West to close on the resolution.

Senator West: Thank you very much, Mr. President and Members. I would be remiss if I didn't, even though I'm an Omega man, okay, if I didn't say that your sisters from Zeta Phi Beta are here and they're up in the gallery. Thank y'all for being here. This, Members, there's really nothing else that needs to be said. Mr. President, thank you, okay. If we can have political differences, that's all, I mean that's what this body is about. We deal with issues. But thank you for recognizing that all Texans need to be represented, the portraits in this hallowed Chamber where people from all over

the State of Texas that didn't think that they were coming here to witness what they witnessed. They're here from chambers of commerce and different other associations and organizations, but I can assure you that when they go back home they will Google who Opal Lee is and what she means to Texas and also to this country. And so, with that I move adoption of Senate Resolution 148.

President: Now, Members, we're all going to stand but then don't rush up like normal because we want to do the unveiling, okay. So, first of all, let's stand at our desk. All supporting this great resolution say, aye. The resolution is adopted. And now, let's unveil the painting.

(Senator Campbell in Chair)

GUESTS PRESENTED

Senator Zaffirini was recognized and introduced to the Senate a delegation from the City of Laredo including Mayor Victor Trevino; Councilmember Alberto Torres; Interim City Manager Rosario Cabello; Minita Ramirez, President, Texas A&M International University; and Lupita Zepeda, President, Laredo College Board of Trustees.

Senator Zaffirini introduced to the Senate a George Washington's Birthday Association delegation including Jose A. Palacios Jr., portraying George Washington; Linda Cristina Benavides Alexander, portraying Martha Dandridge Washington; Leila Leigh Graham, portraying Princess Pocahontas; Ricardo Ferdin Jr., portraying Chief White Eagle; D. Matthew Gibson, President; and Abrazo Children: Mila Fernanda Garcia and Francisco Marcel Gonzalez Flores, representing the United States and Andressa Maria Vasquez Urteaga and Jeremiah Cabrera, representing Mexico.

Senator Zaffirini introduced to the Senate a delegation from Live Oak County including County Judge James Liska, Treasurer Kitley Moffatt-Wasicek, and former County Judge Jim Huff.

Senator Zaffirini introduced to the Senate a delegation from McMullen County including County Judge James Teal, County Attorney Kimberly Kreider-Dusek, Treasurer Jill Atkinson, and Tiffany McWilliams, Assistant District Attorney.

Senator Zaffirini introduced to the Senate a St. Edwards University delegation including President Montserrat Fuentes; Provost Marianne Ward-Peradoza; Lisa Kirkpatrick, Vice-president of Administration and Student Affairs; and Liz Johnson, Director of External Affairs.

The Senate welcomed its guests.

PHYSICIAN OF THE DAY

Senator Whitmire was recognized and presented Dr. Crystal Nwagwu of Houston as the Physician of the Day.

The Senate welcomed Dr. Nwagwu, accompanied by Chad R. Scott, and thanked her for her participation in the Physician of the Day program sponsored by the Texas Academy of Family Physicians.

SENATE RESOLUTION 149

Senator Perry offered the following resolution:

SR 149, Recognizing 2023 as the Texas State Parks Centennial.

The resolution was read and was adopted without objection.

GUESTS PRESENTED

Senator Perry, joined by Senators Kolkhorst and Springer, was recognized and introduced to the Senate a Parks and Wildlife Commission delegation including Arch H. "Beaver" Aplin III, David Yoskowitz, Rodney Franklin, Justin Rhodes, and Todd McClannahan.

The Senate welcomed its guests.

SENATE RESOLUTION 132

Senator Gutierrez offered the following resolution:

WHEREAS, Residents of Maverick County are gathering in Austin to celebrate Maverick County Day at the State Capitol; and

WHEREAS, Located in Southwest Texas, Maverick County was formed in 1856 and named for cattleman and state legislator Samuel Augustus Maverick; the county was formally organized 15 years later, and its county seat, Eagle Pass, was established on the border between Texas and Mexico; the city was originally named El Paso del Aguila because of the frequent flights of Mexican eagles over the area; and

WHEREAS, Over the years, city and county officials have demonstrated an ongoing commitment to working together to create jobs, encourage young people, and improve the quality of life in their region of the state; civic leaders are also dedicated to the effective collaboration of the public and private sectors and to the administration of an economic development plan that will attract and retain solid business, industry, and trade, as well as affordable housing; and

WHEREAS, With three international bridges, including a rail bridge, Maverick County has become an important port of entry for international commerce, and the Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas provides a significant source of jobs, revenue, and tourism; visitors to the region can also learn about area history at Fort Duncan Park and San Juan Plaza and enjoy outdoor recreation at Maverick County Lake; moreover, they can stroll the streets of historic downtown Eagle Pass, which has been designated as a Texas Main Street City by the Texas Historical Commission; and

WHEREAS, Even as they celebrate their rich heritage, the hardworking people of Maverick County are looking ahead to the opportunities of the future, and they may reflect with pride on their contributions to the story of the Lone Star State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the 88th Texas Legislature hereby recognize Maverick County Day at the State Capitol and extend a warm welcome to the visiting delegation.

SR 132 was read and was adopted without objection.

GUESTS PRESENTED

Senator Gutierrez was recognized and introduced to the Senate a delegation from Maverick County including County Judge Ramsey English Cantú; Eagle Pass Mayor Rolando Salinas; Jorge Barrera, Eagle Pass Independent School District; Aaron Valdez, Maverick County Hospital District; and Morris Libson, Eagle Pass-Maverick County Economic Development Alliance.

The Senate welcomed its guests.

SENATE RESOLUTION 145

Senator Sparks offered the following resolution:

SR 145, Recognizing February 6 through 8, 2023, as Midland-Odessa Days.

The resolution was read and was adopted without objection.

GUESTS PRESENTED

Senator Sparks was recognized and introduced to the Senate a delegation from the cities of Midland and Odessa.

The Senate welcomed its guests.

REMARKS ORDERED PRINTED

On motion of Senator Hughes and by unanimous consent, the remarks by Senator Sparks regarding **SR 145** were ordered reduced to writing and printed in the *Senate Journal* as follows:

Thank you, Madam President. I would like, if I can get you guys to stand up. These are my friends from Midland-Odessa. These are leaders in our community, they have been here for the last two days, being a part of Midland-Odessa Days at the State Capitol. So, set only 20 miles apart in the ranching and oil country of West Texas, these vibrant Texas cities got their start on the stops of the Texas and Pacific Railway in the 1880s. By 1890, Midland was one of the most important centers for shipping cattle in Texas. Odessa began its rapid growth with the discovery of oil in the Permian Basin in the 1920s. The Permian Basin, by the way, is one of the largest oil producing regions in the world and accounts for 40 percent of all oil production in the United States. I would also like to add it is also a major contributing factor to the now-\$33 billion surplus that we have to enjoy here in the State of Texas. This region boasts many diversified museums and cultural experiences including West Texas Symphony, Midland Festival Ballet. It's also home to Chris Kyle War Memorial Plaza and the Permian Basin Petroleum Museum. In addition, I want to say even though people like to think that, you know, cattle and oil are what make West Texas great, really, what makes Texas great, what makes West Texas great, are its people. And I would argue that they still embody the attributes that made Texas the great state that it is. Those are people that love family, people that have faith in Jesus, people that are not afraid to work hard, and those that know and are willing to give back to their community and to our great state. And so, I thank you guys for being here. I would like to if I could, send you

guys out with a blessing and this is from Proverbs 8:32-35: Now then my children listen to me, blessed are those who keep my ways. Listen to my instruction and be wise, do not disregard it. Blessed are those who listen to me, watching daily at my doors, waiting at my doorway. For those who find me find life and receive favor from the Lord. May you guys find favor from the Lord and thank you. I am blessed to represent West Texas and stand strong with you guys as we innovate to create a better West Texas and a stronger Texas. Thank you guys for being here. Please help me recognize our leaders from West Texas.

SENATE RESOLUTION 140

Senator LaMantia offered the following resolution:

SR 140, Recognizing February 8, 2023, as Bee County Day.

The resolution was read and was adopted without objection.

GUESTS PRESENTED

Senator LaMantia was recognized and introduced to the Senate a delegation from Bee County including Randy Seitz, Albert Reynolds, Brian Watson, Melissa Sanchez, Andrew Rothenbach, Crystal Franco, Ava Salazar, Dara Carrillo, and Tori Gonzalez.

The Senate welcomed its guests.

MESSAGES FROM THE GOVERNOR

The following Messages from the Governor were read and were referred to the Committee on Nominations:

February 7, 2023

Austin, Texas

TO THE SENATE OF THE EIGHTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE, REGULAR SESSION:

I ask the advice, consent and confirmation of the Senate with respect to the following appointments:

To be members of the Council on Sex Offender Treatment for terms to expire as indicated:

To Expire February 1, 2025:

Elizabeth L. Cox

San Antonio, Texas

(replacing Tiffany S. Strother of Godley who resigned)

To Expire February 1, 2029:

Andrea K.M. Ortiz

Dallas, Texas

(replacing Elizabeth P. Aliseda, O.D. of Beeville whose term expired)

Respectfully submitted,

/s/Greg Abbott

Governor

February 8, 2023
Austin, Texas

TO THE SENATE OF THE EIGHTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE, REGULAR SESSION:

I ask the advice, consent and confirmation of the Senate with respect to the following appointment:

To be a member of the Pecos River Compact Commission for a term to expire January 23, 2029:

Frederic H.S. "Rick" Tate
Marfa, Texas
(Commissioner Tate is being reappointed)

Respectfully submitted,

/s/Greg Abbott
Governor

February 8, 2023
Austin, Texas

TO THE SENATE OF THE EIGHTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE, REGULAR SESSION:

I ask the advice, consent and confirmation of the Senate with respect to the following appointment:

To be a member of the Red River Compact Commission for a term to expire February 1, 2029:

Robin L. Phillips
Sherman, Texas
(Commissioner Phillips is being reappointed)

Respectfully submitted,

/s/Greg Abbott
Governor

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

HOUSE CHAMBER

Austin, Texas

Wednesday, February 8, 2023 - 1

The Honorable President of the Senate
Senate Chamber
Austin, Texas

Mr. President:

I am directed by the house to inform the senate that the house has taken the following action:

THE HOUSE HAS PASSED THE FOLLOWING MEASURES:

SCR 14

Whitmire

Sponsor: Goldman

Granting the legislature permission to adjourn for more than three days during the period beginning on Wednesday, February 8, 2023, and ending on Tuesday, February 14, 2023.

Respectfully,

/s/Stephen Brown,

Chief Clerk

House of Representatives

CO-AUTHOR OF SENATE BILL 92

On motion of Senator Johnson, Senator Eckhardt will be shown as Co-author of **SB 92**.

CO-AUTHORS OF SENATE BILL 236

On motion of Senator Hinojosa, Senators Eckhardt and LaMantia will be shown as Co-authors of **SB 236**.

CO-AUTHOR OF SENATE BILL 244

On motion of Senator Kolkhorst, Senator Eckhardt will be shown as Co-author of **SB 244**.

CO-AUTHOR OF SENATE BILL 265

On motion of Senator Perry, Senator Hall will be shown as Co-author of **SB 265**.

CO-AUTHOR OF SENATE BILL 287

On motion of Senator Huffman, Senator Eckhardt will be shown as Co-author of **SB 287**.

CO-AUTHOR OF SENATE BILL 318

On motion of Senator Hall, Senator Eckhardt will be shown as Co-author of **SB 318**.

CO-AUTHOR OF SENATE BILL 330

On motion of Senator Hall, Senator Flores will be shown as Co-author of **SB 330**.

CO-AUTHOR OF SENATE BILL 340

On motion of Senator Springer, Senator Eckhardt will be shown as Co-author of **SB 340**.

CO-AUTHORS OF SENATE BILL 465

On motion of Senator Bettencourt, Senators Hinojosa and Middleton will be shown as Co-authors of **SB 465**.

CO-AUTHOR OF SENATE BILL 476

On motion of Senator Hughes, Senator Kolkhorst will be shown as Co-author of **SB 476**.

CO-AUTHORS OF SENATE BILL 495

On motion of Senator Hughes, Senators Eckhardt and Middleton will be shown as Co-authors of **SB 495**.

CO-AUTHOR OF SENATE BILL 625

On motion of Senator Campbell, Senator Kolkhorst will be shown as Co-author of **SB 625**.

CO-AUTHORS OF SENATE BILL 649

On motion of Senator Middleton, Senators Kolkhorst and Perry will be shown as Co-authors of **SB 649**.

CO-AUTHORS OF SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 4

On motion of Senator Eckhardt, Senators Flores, Hinojosa, Whitmire, and Zaffirini will be shown as Co-authors of **SCR 4**.

CO-AUTHOR OF SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 39

On motion of Senator Kolkhorst, Senator Springer will be shown as Co-author of **SJR 39**.

RESOLUTIONS OF RECOGNITION

The following resolutions were adopted by the Senate:

Official Designation Resolutions

SR 133 by Zaffirini, Recognizing February 9, 2023, as St. Edward's University Day.

SR 144 by Zaffirini, Recognizing February 8, 2023, as Live Oak County Day.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion of Senator Whitmire, the Senate at 1:05 p.m. adjourned until 11:00 a.m. Tuesday, February 14, 2023.

APPENDIX

RESOLUTIONS ENROLLED

February 8, 2023

SCR 14, SR 132, SR 133, SR 140, SR 144, SR 145, SR 148, SR 149