

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 12

BY SENATOR MURRAY AND REPRESENTATIVE BROSSETT

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To commend the many contributions made by Irish-Americans toward the betterment of the state and nation and to designate each March as Irish-American Heritage Month.

WHEREAS, it is most appropriate that the Legislature of Louisiana recognizes the historic, cultural, social, and artistic contributions made to the enrichment of life in Louisiana by those citizens of Irish-American lineage; and

WHEREAS, the sons and daughters of Erin (Ireland) came to make a new life in America and settled throughout Louisiana ever since its earliest beginnings as a colony; and

WHEREAS, in the 1840s many immigrated from their homeland to port cities like New Orleans, Lake Charles, and Baton Rouge to flee the horror and starvation of the Great Hunger, *An Gorta Mor*; and

WHEREAS, as they left behind the familiar green hills of Ireland, the close-knit Irish settled with their families into enclaves that became well-known neighborhoods such as the Irish Channel and the Third Ward in New Orleans; and

WHEREAS, immediately Irish immigrants provided the essential labor force needed for the enormous expansion of the Industrial Age in America, in particular the construction of the infrastructure of metropolitan New Orleans, that included dangerous undertakings like the New Basin Canal, where thousands of laborers perished from such perils as structural collapse and mosquito-borne disease; and

WHEREAS, the Irish became factory workers, railroad builders, blacksmiths, carpenters, wood carvers, shipbuilders, brick masons, boat-builders, stevedores, domestics, bartenders, musicians, singers, and waiters, whose talent, hard work, and sheer determination overcame countless obstacles to achieve success and find happiness in their new surroundings; and

WHEREAS, they built beautiful and historic parish churches in Louisiana, each resplendent with stained glass windows, beautifully carved wooden altars, and marble statuary, and choir lofts filled with Irish tenor voices that sang out in praise of God's tender mercies; and

WHEREAS, the Irish are a people of deep abiding faith, many of whom have taken a vow of religious service and have ministered to their fellow man in the ecclesiastical vocations of clergy and laity; and

WHEREAS, March 17th is the Roman Catholic saint's day for St. Patrick, the humble and courageous patron saint of Ireland, who converted the Irish to Christianity; and

WHEREAS, since 1809, various cities throughout Louisiana have commemorated their Irish heritage with parades and other festive events during the month of March; and

WHEREAS, the state of Louisiana is endowed with a colorful history enriched by Irish-Americans whose contributions are an integral part of its unique culture and diversity.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby recognize the numerous contributions made to the state's history and betterment by generations of Irish-Americans and does hereby designate March of each year as Irish-American Heritage Month.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Joseph Casler, president of the Ancient Order of Hibernians of Louisiana, Inc.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES