

House Concurrent Resolution 20, sponsored by Rep. Warren Chisum, R-Pampa, was passed by both houses of the Legislature on March 11, 2003, and later signed by Governor Rick Perry.

H.C.R. No. 20

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, March 1, 2003, is the 40th anniversary of the agreement between the State of Texas and the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission giving Texas licensing and regulatory authority over radioactive materials in the state, and this occasion presents an opportune time to reflect on the development and importance of regulatory oversight of radioactive materials in Texas; and

WHEREAS, The Texas Department of Health (TDH) first became involved in radiological health activities in 1947 and during the next nine years conducted a series of short courses about radiological hazards, demonstrated the radiation hazards of shoe-fitting fluoroscopes, and adopted regulations governing radiation exposure; and

WHEREAS, In 1959 the Texas Legislature created the Radiation Study Committee to review all aspects of Texas' role in nuclear energy, and this led to the passage of the Texas Radiation Control Act in 1961 and subsequent creation of the Texas Radiation Advisory Board and designation of TDH as Texas' radiation control agency; and

WHEREAS, On March 1, 1963, when the agreement between the State of Texas and the Atomic Energy Commission became effective, there were 520 active radioactive material licenses, and today the Bureau of Radiation Control, which administers the radiation control program for TDH, regulates approximately 1,550 such licenses and 16,000 registrations for use of x-ray machines; and

WHEREAS, Texas is one of only three states that also have regulatory authority over uranium recovery and low-level radioactive waste disposal in addition to the regulatory authority assumed by the signatory states under the basic agreement; TDH issues permits for uranium recovery, and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality regulates the disposal of low-level radioactive waste; and

WHEREAS, Virtually every industry in Texas and many educational and medical facilities use radioactive materials, and the beneficial uses of radiation include diagnostic nuclear medicine, highway construction materials testing, pipeline radiography, emergency exit lighting, and malignant cancer treatment; and

WHEREAS, Texas' decision to accept authority for radioactive materials was a significant milestone that paved the way for subsequent efforts to ensure that the beneficial uses of radiation are maximized while unnecessary exposure to radiation affecting occupational workers and Texas citizens can be minimized; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the 78th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby commemorate the 40th anniversary of the agreement between Texas and the Atomic Energy Commission, and its successor agency, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and that it honor the individuals responsible for implementation of this historic compact.