

1 A RESOLUTION recognizing March as Irish American Heritage Month for
2 Kentucky.

3 WHEREAS, from our country's earliest day, Irish immigrants and their descendants
4 have contributed leadership, wisdom, and vitality to not only Kentucky but America as a
5 whole. Through nine signers of the Declaration of Independence and 22 Presidents with
6 Irish roots, Irish Americans have made an incredible mark in the shaping of the great city
7 of Louisville and the Commonwealth of Kentucky; and

8 WHEREAS, throughout their long history, the Irish have been ardent in their
9 passion for liberty and hatred of oppression and renowned for their loyalty. The Irish have
10 from the beginning been prominent in the defense of this nation. Twenty of George
11 Washington's generals and an estimated quarter of his Continental Army were composed
12 of Irish Americans. The first officer commissioned by Washington in the newly formed
13 Navy was an Irishman named John Barry, who became Commodore of the Continental
14 Navy; and

15 WHEREAS, in 1804, pirates attacked the United States Navy, and civilian ships
16 were kidnapped and imprisoned in Derne and Tripoli. When negotiations to pay a ransom
17 of \$100,000 failed to gain their release and the American flag staff was cut down in front
18 of the United States Consulate, war was declared on Tripoli. On April 27, 1805,
19 Lieutenant Presley O'Bannon of Kentucky led a charge pressing through a shower of
20 enemy gunfire and took possession of enemy batteries, posting an American flag on the
21 ramparts and turning the guns on the enemy. Victory was won in the ensuing two-hour
22 battle, and for the first time in United States history, an American flag flew over a fortress
23 of the Old World. O'Bannon's deeds are remembered in the Marine Corps Hymn and the
24 flag of the Corps, and the sword used in the dress uniform of the Corps is a copy of the
25 one presented to O'Bannon by Hamet, a chieftain and ally of the United States in the
26 Mediterranean. The final resting place of Lieutenant O'Bannon is the cemetery on the hill
27 overlooking the Capitol in Frankfort; and

1 WHEREAS, Ralph Waldo Rose, born in Louisville in 1885 of Irish parents,
2 attended the University of Michigan on scholarship to compete on the track team in the
3 shotput, discus, and hammer throw. In 1904, Rose competed in the Olympics in St. Louis
4 winning a gold, silver, and bronze medal in these events, respectively. Rose was selected
5 by the 1908 Olympic Committee to carry the United States flag in the opening
6 ceremonies in the Summer Olympics in London. When passing King Edward the
7 Seventh, Rose broke tradition and refused to dip the flag to the British King. No United
8 States flag has ever been dipped to any monarch since; and

9 WHEREAS, on Election Day, August 6, 1855, in Louisville, Kentucky, numerous
10 Irish were among the immigrants who were brutally murdered. The crimes occurred as
11 the immigrants were trying to go to the polls to cast their ballots in attacks orchestrated by
12 a local political group known as the "Know Nothings," because they felt that the large
13 influx of immigrants would "undermine the American way of life"; and

14 WHEREAS, the Irish community of Louisville has a distinguished tradition of
15 sponsoring the St. Patrick's Parade the Saturday before St. Patrick's Day on March 17 of
16 each year, thereby renewing their connections to the land of their ancestry as they pass
17 along the traditions of the Irish people to the next generation, and celebrating their pride
18 and heritage with the community irrespective of ethnicity; and

19 WHEREAS, it is fitting and proper to celebrate the rich culture, heritage, and
20 valuable contributions of the Irish people during the month of March, when people of
21 Irish descent celebrate the Patron Saint of Ireland, St. Patrick, on March 17;

22 NOW, THEREFORE,

23 ***Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the***
24 ***Commonwealth of Kentucky:***

25 ➔Section 1. Due to the overwhelming number of citizens within the
26 Commonwealth of Kentucky who are Irish or are descendants of Irish immigrants and the
27 tremendous contributions of Irish Americans to our nation, our Commonwealth, and our

1 communities, the House of Representatives hereby recognizes March as Irish American
2 Heritage Month for Kentucky.

3 ➔Section 2. The Clerk of the House of Representatives is directed to transmit a
4 copy of this Resolution to John O'Dwyer, President, Ancient Order of Hibernians in
5 Louisville, 915 Lone Tree Court, Louisville, Kentucky 40223; and to Molly Dobson,
6 President, Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians in Louisville, 3813 Brody Lane,
7 Louisville, Kentucky 40299.