

1 A RESOLUTION recognizing March 2024 as Irish American Heritage Month.

2 WHEREAS, from our country's earliest days, Irish immigrants and their
3 descendants have contributed leadership, wisdom, and vitality to not only Kentucky but
4 America as a whole. Through nine signers of the Declaration of Independence and 23
5 Presidents with Irish roots, Irish Americans have made an indelible mark in the shaping
6 of the great city of Louisville and the Commonwealth of Kentucky; and

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

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

27 WHEREAS, Ralph Waldo Rose, born in Louisville in 1885 of Irish parents,

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

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

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

18 WHEREAS, a new Hibernian division was established in 2018 in Lexington and
19 named for the late Dr. Pearse Lyons, Irish founder of Alltech in Nicholasville, a large
20 employer in the Commonwealth and the first naming sponsor of the World Equestrian
21 Games when it came to the United States and to Kentucky for the first time in 2010, and
22 whereas the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Lexington, begun in 1980 and produced by the
23 city's Department of Parks and Recreation with support of local business and cultural
24 organizations, is the longest-running citywide civic event in the city; and

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

1 NOW, THEREFORE,

2 *Be it resolved by the Senate of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of*
3 *Kentucky:*

4 ➔Section 1. Due to the overwhelming number of citizens within the
5 Commonwealth of Kentucky who are Irish or are descendants of Irish immigrants and the
6 tremendous contributions of Irish Americans to our nation, our Commonwealth, and our
7 communities, the Senate hereby recognizes March as Irish American Heritage Month for
8 Kentucky.

9 ➔Section 2. The Clerk of the Senate is directed to transmit a copy of this
10 Resolution to Senator Julie Raque Adams for presentation.