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The Honorable Brandon Creighton
Texas House of Representatives
Post Office Box 2910
Austin, Texas 78768-2910

Re: House Bill 1624 (the creation of a recognition day honoring
Charles B. Stewart)

Dear Representative Creighton:

I urge the committee on Culture, Recreation and Tourism to take no action leading to passage of House Bill 1624 when it is considered on April 14, 2009. There is significant controversy over the veracity of claims made on behalf of Charles Stewart regarding his alleged creation of the Lone Star Flag and his reputed position as first secretary of state of the Republic of Texas. Any recognition of Mr. Stewart, in my opinion, would be inappropriate while the historical facts are still very much in question.

I have a deep interest in this matter for several reasons. I was historian of the Historic Flags of Texas Project, which as you may recall involved documenting and conserving the historic flag collection of the Texas State Library and Archives under the aegis of the Texas Historical Commission. I then was curator for the Museum of Fine Arts Houston of the 2002 exhibition *Texas Flags 1836-1941*. I am author of the award-winning book *Texas Flags* (Texas A&M Press, 2001), which many historians consider to be the definitive scholarly work on the history of flags in Texas.

But it is as an educator that I am most concerned. A large portion of my academic duties involves preparing students to teach history in the Texas public schools. I try to instill in my them a sense of duty to be impartial and accurate in what they teach. Honoring Charles Stewart in any way before the facts are established means succumbing to the same old boosterism that used to plague the teaching of history in this state. Please do not send the wrong message to my students by advancing this bill.

Sincerely

Robert Maberry Jr, PhD.

Cc: Members, Culture, Recreation and Tourism Committee