

By: Keffer of Eastland

H.R. No. 1175

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Bette Armstrong moved with her husband, Jim, to
2 Eastland in 1993 in search of a nice, quiet town in which to enjoy
3 their retirement together, little dreaming that she would soon
4 embrace a local legend so fully that she would become one of the
5 community's best-known boosters and most beloved residents; and

6 WHEREAS, From her initial involvement as the seamstress
7 behind the design of Lil' Rippy, a lovable stuffed horned toad doll,
8 for a contest she read about in the newspaper, Mrs. Armstrong has
9 continued to draw on her talent and energy to promote the tale of
10 the renowned reptile named Old Rip, a horned toad who was buried for
11 31 years in the cornerstone of the Eastland County Courthouse and
12 emerged from the experience alive; and

13 WHEREAS, By creating cookie cutters, refrigerator magnets,
14 and other horned toad memorabilia and organizing contests and
15 events centered on Old Rip's lengthy rest and reentry into Eastland
16 society, Mrs. Armstrong has generated renewed interest in the
17 community's most popular tourist attraction; and

18 WHEREAS, Thanks in part to the generous promotional efforts
19 and infectious enthusiasm of Mrs. Armstrong, Old Rip the Horned
20 Toad has secured a permanent place of honor in Texas lore alongside
21 such other celebrated Lone Star phenomena as the jackelope and the
22 Marfa Lights; and

23 WHEREAS, A member of the Eastland Chamber of Commerce and the
24 Horned Lizard Conservation Society, Mrs. Armstrong is

1 affectionately known around Eastland as the "Toad Lady," and she
2 has also demonstrated her commitment to the critter by sewing and
3 donning a horned toad costume, which she has worn for numerous
4 appearances, including a trip to the State Capitol during the 77th
5 Legislative Session when this chamber paid tribute to Old Rip as the
6 Most Famous Horned Toad in Texas; and

7 WHEREAS, This lovely lady's tireless work has elevated Old
8 Rip's fame to heights enjoyed in bygone days when he visited
9 President Coolidge and appeared with Texas Governor John Connally;
10 Mrs. Armstrong is now as closely associated with the Eastland
11 landscape locally as her famous subject, and though she is moving to
12 a new home, she may take pride in knowing that her efforts have
13 brought a smile to the faces of countless Texans and earned her the
14 lasting respect and friendship of a great many people; now,
15 therefore, be it

16 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 78th Texas
17 Legislature hereby commend Bette Armstrong for her many good works
18 in behalf of the story of Old Rip and Eastland County and extend to
19 her sincere best wishes for continued happiness; and, be it further

20 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
21 prepared for Mrs. Armstrong as an expression of high regard by the
22 Texas House of Representatives.