

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, The effects of the fire ant in Texas are costly both  
2   in economic and health terms, and it is important for citizens to be  
3   aware of the dangers and damage associated with these insects; and

4           WHEREAS, A native of South America, the red imported fire ant  
5   now infests more than 80 million acres in the state, primarily in  
6   its eastern two-thirds; in heavily infested areas, fire ants sting  
7   more than 50 percent of the human population each year, with  
8   children and elderly Texans having the highest sting rate and the  
9   greatest risk of severe attacks; the insects are known to invade  
10   residences and public buildings, including nursing homes, schools,  
11   and other sites where people are at high risk for stings; and

12          WHEREAS, It is estimated that fire ants sting nearly five  
13   million Americans every year, and a 2003 poll showed that 81 percent  
14   of Texans reported that they have been stung; one percent of the  
15   population is hypersensitive to fire ant stings and risks death if  
16   untreated; and

17          WHEREAS, In addition to the health and safety risk, these  
18   insects also negatively impact the economy and the environment; a  
19   study by Texas A&M University has shown that damage and management  
20   of fire ants in the five major urban areas of the state cost more  
21   than \$580 million annually, including over \$11 million in  
22   electrical equipment destruction; infestation results in  
23   structural damage, contaminated water systems, and reduced  
24   property values, and Texas homeowners spend up to \$600 per year to

1 control the fire ant population; and

2 WHEREAS, The state's veterinarians cite these pests as a  
3 serious threat to livestock health as well, reporting more than  
4 7,000 fire ant injury cases annually; cattle producers suffer  
5 economic losses from cattle injury and death as well as damage to  
6 feed and hay; moreover, Texas wildlife is seriously affected by  
7 fire ant infestation, and certain waterbird colonies have  
8 experienced 100 percent hatchling mortality in fire ant infested  
9 areas; and

10 WHEREAS, The month of April marks the beginning of red  
11 imported fire ant treatment season, and it is an especially  
12 critical time of year to promote greater awareness of the fire ant  
13 issue among the residents of this state; now, therefore, be it

14 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 79th Texas  
15 Legislature hereby recognize April 14, 2005, as Fire Ant Prevention  
16 Day in Texas and encourage all citizens to learn about the dangers  
17 of fire ants as well as preventive measures available to combat  
18 them.

Hardcastle

H.R. No. 1001

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Speaker of the House

I certify that H.R. No. 1001 was adopted by the House on April 12, 2005, by a non-record vote.

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Chief Clerk of the House