

BILL ANALYSIS

H.C.R. 15
By: Brown, Betty
Culture, Recreation, & Tourism
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Athens, Texas boasts a strong claim to being the original home of the hamburger. The McDonald's management training center has traced its beginnings back to the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair, where it was sold by a vendor. A journalist made note of the new sandwich and said that it was the vendor's creation. The vendor, Fletcher Davis, moved to Athens in the 1880s and had a flair for preparing food and usually served as chef at his employer's picnics. He later opened a lunch counter on the courthouse square, where he sold the hamburger. Although it was served with slices of fresh-baked bread instead of a bun, it contained ground beef, mustard, mayonnaise, a slice of a Bermuda onion, and sliced cucumber pickles. Customers could also enjoy the hamburger with fried potatoes and tomato sauce. The journalist was told that Davis learned to cook the fried potatoes from a friend in Paris, Texas, which he misunderstood and described the item to his readers as french-fried potatoes.

According to Mr. Davis' nephew, the sandwich acquired its name during the potter's sojourn in St. Louis. Local residence of German descent may have named the sandwich after the city of Hamburg. Each June, residents of Athens celebrate the hamburger's origins in their community with Uncle Fletch's Burger and Bar-B-Q cook-off.

The hamburger has become one of the best loved foods in America. The volume of the burger business helps to drive the beef and grain industries and support the employment of a substantial workforce.

The connection between Athens, Fletcher Davis, and the hamburger of the St. Louis World's Fair has been well documented. Therefore, it is fitting that the town's role in the history of the All-American sandwich be recognized.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This concurrent resolution does not grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

HCR 15 would designate Athens, Texas as the Original Home of the Hamburger.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Upon passage, the concurrent resolution takes effect immediately.