

By: Brown of Kaufman

H.C.R. No. 15

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, Athens, Texas, boasts a strong claim to being the
2 original home of one of the nation's favorite foods, the hamburger;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, Although accounts differ as to the origins of this
5 American classic, the staff at McDonald's management training
6 center has traced its beginnings back to the 1904 St. Louis World's
7 Fair, where it was sold by a vendor on the midway; a reporter for the
8 New York *Tribune*, writing about the fair, made note of the new
9 sandwich in an article and commented that it was the vendor's own
10 creation; and

11 WHEREAS, The vendor, Fletcher Davis, had moved from Missouri
12 to Athens in the 1880s to take a job at the Miller pottery works;
13 Mr. Davis had a flair for preparing food and usually served as chef
14 at his employer's picnics; when the business slowed down in the late
15 1800s, he opened a lunchcounter on the courthouse square, where he
16 sold the sandwich that would become such a staple of the U.S. diet;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, Although it was served with slices of fresh-baked
19 bread instead of a bun, this early version of the hamburger was then
20 much like it is today and contained ground beef, ground mustard
21 mixed with mayonnaise, a large slice of Bermuda onion, and sliced
22 cucumber pickles; customers could also enjoy fried potatoes, served
23 with a thick tomato sauce; when the journalist from the *Tribune* was
24 told that Mr. Davis had learned to fix potatoes in that manner from

1 a friend in Paris, Texas, he misunderstood and described the item to
2 his readers as french-fried potatoes; and

3 WHEREAS, According to a nephew of Mr. Davis's, the new
4 sandwich acquired its name during the potter's sojourn in
5 St. Louis; one theory holds that local residents of German descent
6 may have named the sandwich after the city of Hamburg, whose
7 citizens had a special affinity for ground meat; each June,
8 residents of Athens celebrate the hamburger's origins in their
9 community with Uncle Fletch's Burger and Bar-B-Q Cook-Off; and

10 WHEREAS, A century after the hamburger debuted on the
11 national stage, it has become one of the best-loved foods in
12 America; its economic impact is no less evident than its
13 popularity: the immense volume of the burger business helps to
14 drive the beef and grain industries and supports the employment of a
15 substantial workforce; and

16 WHEREAS, The connection between Athens, Fletcher Davis, and
17 the famed hamburger of the St. Louis World's Fair has been well
18 documented, and it is fitting that the town's role in the history of
19 that all-American sandwich be appropriately recognized; now,
20 therefore, be it

21 RESOLVED, That the 80th Legislature of the State of Texas
22 hereby formally designate Athens, Texas, as the Original Home of
23 the Hamburger.