

By: Chisum

H.C.R. No. 25

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, Situated in Parmer County, on the high plains of the
2 Llano Estacado, the town of Friona has thrived as an agricultural
3 center since its founding a century ago; and

4 WHEREAS, To celebrate the community's notable ranching and
5 farming heritage, civic leaders have inaugurated a highly
6 successful annual event that showcases three of the area's primary
7 agricultural products; sponsored by the Friona Chamber of Commerce
8 and Agriculture and the Texas Cooperative Extension of Parmer
9 County, Friona's Cheeseburger Cook-Off and Festival brings
10 together an appreciative throng to enjoy one of America's most
11 popular meals, a hearty sandwich that reflects the area's bountiful
12 harvests of wheat and its robust beef and dairy industries; and

13 WHEREAS, Among the pillars that have supported the Parmer
14 County economy, cattle raising was the first to be established;
15 ranching was introduced within a decade of the county's creation in
16 1876, shortly after the Panhandle was opened for settlement; in
17 1882, the still-unpopulated county formed part of the 3 million
18 acres of public land that was acquired by a group of private
19 investors, the Capitol Syndicate, in exchange for financing
20 construction of the new state capitol; until it could sell the land
21 to settlers, the syndicate operated its vast holdings as a cattle
22 ranch, the legendary XIT; and

23 WHEREAS, By the late 1890s, steps were being taken to foster
24 permanent settlement in the county; in 1898, the Pecos and Northern

1 Texas Railway Company was chartered to connect Amarillo and the
2 Texas-New Mexico state line, and several switches and town sites
3 were developed along the route of the new railroad; Friona, now the
4 largest town in the county, originated as a shipping station and was
5 subsequently platted in 1906; and

6 WHEREAS, During the first three decades of the 20th century,
7 Friona saw a growing influx of farmers and the conversion of much
8 former rangeland into cultivated fields; contributing to the
9 success of ranchers and farmers alike was the ready availability of
10 flat, affordable land, a surface soil of sandy loam, and a
11 favorable climate; those who have made their living from that land
12 have relied on both irrigation, which increased dramatically during
13 the 1950s, and dry-land farming techniques; and

14 WHEREAS, Since the 1980s, Parmer County has ranked as one of
15 the leading agricultural counties in Texas, and its prominence has
16 rested in fair measure on the contributions of dedicated,
17 forward-looking farmers and cattlemen around Friona; in addition to
18 well-established, mixed-crop production, this area enjoys a
19 rapidly expanding dairy industry, with some seven dairies in
20 operation and six more under construction as of June 2006; and

21 WHEREAS, Area cattle- and farm-related businesses include
22 one of the largest plants in the meat-packing industry and
23 substantial feed-manufacturing and grain-storage facilities, as
24 well as cold-storage plants, farm-equipment companies, and a newly
25 opened cheese factory; and

26 WHEREAS, With such a history and economic foundation,
27 citizens of Friona knew they had every ingredient they needed to

1 host a classically American jamboree; when the town's Cheeseburger
2 Cook-Off and Festival debuted at Friona City Park on July 15, 2006,
3 during the community's centennial year, 16 teams took to their
4 grills in a spirited contest for culinary laurels; in a show of
5 broad-based support for the event, Cargill Meat Solutions donated
6 beef for 1,000 patties, Mrs. Baird's donated the buns, the cheese
7 factory donated the cheese, Spring Lake Farms donated potatoes for
8 the fries, and members of the Lions Club cooked the fries; and

9 WHEREAS, If the Cheeseburger Cook-Off and Festival serves as
10 a cheerful salute to Friona's deep agricultural roots and thriving
11 modern-day enterprises, it also typifies, in its character as a
12 great, convivial backyard barbecue, the warm, neighborly spirit of
13 this close-knit community, and it is fitting that the
14 cheeseburger's symbolic value for Friona be appropriately
15 recognized; now, therefore, be it

16 RESOLVED, That the 80th Legislature of the State of Texas
17 hereby designate Friona as the official Cheeseburger Capital of
18 Texas.