

1-1 By: Bonnen (Senate Sponsor - Jackson) H.C.R. No. 30
1-2 (In the Senate - Received from the House March 26, 2007;
1-3 April 3, 2007, read first time and referred to Committee on
1-4 Government Organization; May 1, 2007, reported favorably by the
1-5 following vote: Yeas 7, Nays 0; May 1, 2007, sent to printer.)

1-6 HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1-7 WHEREAS, The State of Texas has customarily recognized a
1-8 variety of official symbols as tangible representations of its
1-9 cultural heritage and natural history; and

1-10 WHEREAS, Among the most extraordinary of the state's
1-11 indigenous fauna is the Texas blind salamander, a small creature
1-12 that has been found only in Hays County, in the subterranean reaches
1-13 of the Edwards Aquifer around San Marcos; the vulnerability of this
1-14 salamander has been officially recognized since 1967, when it
1-15 appeared on the first endangered species list to be issued by the
1-16 U.S. government; and

1-17 WHEREAS, Though few in number, the Texas blind salamander
1-18 commands scientific attention because it is considered to be the
1-19 most highly adapted of all cave-dwelling salamanders; this
1-20 amphibian lives in complete darkness, unless pushed to the surface
1-21 by flowing water; having no need of sight, it sports only two black
1-22 dots as vestigial eyes; and

1-23 WHEREAS, About five inches long when mature, the Texas blind
1-24 salamander possesses a flat head, frail arms and legs, a long,
1-25 tapering tail, and a fringe of red external gills; its internal
1-26 organs are visible through its translucent skin; the top predator
1-27 in its habitat range, the salamander generally keeps to still
1-28 waters and is able to hunt by sensing water-pressure waves created
1-29 by its prey--tiny snails, shrimp, and other aquatic invertebrates;
1-30 and

1-31 WHEREAS, The Texas blind salamander was discovered in 1895,
1-32 when a well was sunk into a cavern to supply water to the Federal
1-33 Fish Hatchery in San Marcos; Leonhard Stejneger, curator of
1-34 reptiles and amphibians at what is now the National Museum of
1-35 Natural History, provided the original scientific description of
1-36 the animal, which is known variously as *Typhlomolge rathbuni* and
1-37 *Eurycea rathbuni*; and

1-38 WHEREAS, Serious collection of the Texas blind salamander was
1-39 begun in the 1970s and continues to the present time; salamanders
1-40 that are captured are turned over to the San Marcos National Fish
1-41 Hatchery and Technology Center, which operates a captive breeding
1-42 program for the animal; and

1-43 WHEREAS, A remarkable species, one about which we still have
1-44 much to learn, and a denizen of the most richly diverse aquifer on
1-45 earth, the Texas blind salamander is unique to the Lone Star State,
1-46 and it is indeed fitting that this rare creature be accorded special
1-47 recognition; now, therefore, be it

1-48 RESOLVED, That the 80th Legislature of the State of Texas
1-49 hereby designate the Texas blind salamander as the official State
1-50 Amphibian of Texas.

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