

By: King of Taylor

H.C.R. No. 94

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, Few states have so captured the popular imagination
2 as Texas, and the roughly quarter of a century following the Civil
3 War gave rise to one of the most defining images of the Lone Star
4 State: that of the epic cattle drives, when rugged cowboys trailed
5 vast herds of cattle across hundreds of miles of open range; and

6 WHEREAS, Those legendary drives were inflected by a watershed
7 event that marked the end of the Civil War in Texas: the issuance of
8 an order on June 19, 1865, by General Gordon Granger, commander of
9 the Department of Texas, announcing the abolition of slavery;
10 Juneteenth, as the state's emancipation day became known, delivered
11 from bondage approximately 250,000 men, women, and children; and

12 WHEREAS, In 1866, one of those former slaves, Bose Ikard,
13 made history when he joined his employer, Oliver Loving, and his
14 employer's partner, Charles Goodnight, in trailing a herd of cattle
15 to New Mexico and Colorado; the route they followed subsequently
16 gained renown as the Goodnight-Loving Trail; and

17 WHEREAS, Mr. Ikard was far from being the only African
18 American cowboy on the Texas range; in the last half of the 19th
19 century, most cowboys working on the Coastal Plain, between the
20 Sabine and Guadalupe Rivers, were black, and it is estimated that
21 one-third of those participating in cattle drives were
22 minorities--African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans; and

23 WHEREAS, If the end of slavery transformed the social and
24 political landscape of Texas, the rise of the cattle industry had a

1 profound impact on its exhausted economy; when hostilities ceased
2 in 1865, cattle were one resource the state had in abundance; by the
3 close of the war, there were an estimated 8 to 10 head of cattle for
4 each individual in the state; and

5 WHEREAS, Because Texas had no rail connections with the north
6 and east before 1873, and then because freight rates were so
7 expensive, cattlemen relied on trail drives to get their herds to
8 distant markets; most of those drives were conducted by contract
9 drovers, with crews of about 11 persons handling herds that might
10 number as many as 3,000 head; and

11 WHEREAS, In addition to the Goodnight-Loving Trail, the
12 primary Texas cattle routes between 1867 and 1891 included the
13 Chisholm Trail and the Western Trail, which led to the railheads at
14 Abilene and Dodge City, Kansas, respectively; those cattle not
15 destined for rail shipment to the east and north were trailed to
16 Indian reservations, military outposts, and mining camps; and

17 WHEREAS, For much of the trail-driving period, Indian raids
18 remained a potential danger; countering that threat were units of
19 the U.S. Army, many of them composed of African Americans; known by
20 the Indians as Buffalo Soldiers, these men forged a record of
21 outstanding service; and

22 WHEREAS, Before fenced ranges and quarantine laws brought the
23 trail drives to a close, Texas cowboys had driven northward some 10
24 to 12 million cattle, whose sale realized a total of \$250 million;
25 and

26 WHEREAS, Occurring at the same historical moment, the
27 emancipation of Texas slaves and the commencement of the great

1 cattle-drive era afforded new opportunities for a number of Texans,
2 whose labors contributed immeasurably to the development of this
3 state; now, therefore, be it

4 RESOLVED, That the 80th Legislature of the State of Texas
5 hereby designate June 2007 as Juneteenth/Frontier Cowboy Month and
6 commemorate the fortitude and achievements of Texas cowboys of
7 every ethnic background.