

1-1 By: Phillips, et al. (Senate Sponsor - Deuell) H.C.R. No. 53
1-2 (In the Senate - Received from the House April 14, 2009;
1-3 May 6, 2009, read first time and referred to Committee on
1-4 Government Organization; May 20, 2009, reported favorably by the
1-5 following vote: Yeas 6, Nays 0; May 20, 2009, sent to printer.)

1-6 HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1-7 WHEREAS, The history and culture of Texas have been greatly
1-8 influenced by the celebrated era of cowboys and cattle drives and by
1-9 the ranching industry, which continues to be an important component
1-10 of the Texas economy to this day; the significance of these elements
1-11 to the state's identity is reflected in a number of the official
1-12 symbols that have been recognized by the Texas Legislature,
1-13 including the designation of the longhorn as the state large mammal
1-14 and rodeo as the state sport; and

1-15 WHEREAS, Perhaps the most iconic symbol of western lore is
1-16 the horse, and one breed in particular, the American quarter horse,
1-17 has played a central role in the story of the Lone Star State; and

1-18 WHEREAS, This versatile animal likely arrived in Texas soon
1-19 after the region was opened to colonization in the 1820s, helping to
1-20 transform the unsettled wilderness into a productive land of farms
1-21 and small towns; quarter horses also proved invaluable to such
1-22 legendary figures as Sam Houston, whose mount Copper Bottom was a
1-23 member of the breed; and

1-24 WHEREAS, The American quarter horse first caught the
1-25 attention of many during the cattle drives of the late 1800s;
1-26 strong, smart, fast, and tough, the animal was perfectly suited to
1-27 the task of carrying cowboys on the long journeys from Texas to the
1-28 railheads of Missouri and Kansas; the drovers called these prized
1-29 ponies "steeldusts," a name derived from the well-known American
1-30 quarter horse racer Steel Dust, who had won a host of victories in
1-31 Texas in the mid-1800s and who sired numerous offspring; and

1-32 WHEREAS, While widely admired for its achievements on the
1-33 western frontier, the American quarter horse traces its heritage to
1-34 an earlier era of U.S. history; in the colonies of Virginia and
1-35 North Carolina and South Carolina, the Galloway and hobby breeds
1-36 from England were mated with Spanish Barb horses raised by the
1-37 Chickasaw people; the result was the "Celebrated Quarter of a Mile
1-38 Running Horse," which excelled at short-distance races; later,
1-39 Thoroughbred stallions and the hardy mustangs of the American West
1-40 also contributed to the bloodline to produce the horse so beloved by
1-41 the Texas cowhands; and

1-42 WHEREAS, Today, the Lone Star State is home to nearly 500,000
1-43 American quarter horses that are owned by more than 130,000 Texans,
1-44 and the breed has a sizable commercial impact on the state through
1-45 its prominent role in horse shows, racing, ranching, recreational
1-46 riding, and other endeavors; and

1-47 WHEREAS, This noble animal endears itself to Texans in
1-48 numerous ways; rodeo athletes rely on its agility and intelligence
1-49 when competing in roping and barrel-racing events, and riders of
1-50 all abilities know it as a gentle and amiable animal that is a
1-51 faithful companion on the trail; of course, the quarter horse
1-52 remains a fixture on the working ranches of Texas, where its
1-53 hoofbeats still resound across the wide open spaces that were
1-54 trodden by its ancestors in decades past; and

1-55 WHEREAS, A uniquely American breed that reflects the
1-56 historical development of our state and nation, the American
1-57 quarter horse is a vital part of our Texas heritage, and it is
1-58 indeed a most appropriate symbol for the Lone Star State; now,
1-59 therefore, be it

1-60 RESOLVED, That the 81st Legislature of the State of Texas
1-61 hereby designate the American quarter horse as the official State
1-62 Horse of Texas.

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