

By: Heflin

H.R. No. 549

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Public-spirited residents of Big Spring and its  
2 vicinity are gathering in Austin to celebrate Big Spring Area Day  
3 at the State Capitol on March 25, 2009; and

4 WHEREAS, This location in the foothills of the Caprock  
5 escarpment of West Texas was named for the "big spring" in Sulphur  
6 Draw, which was originally a watering place for wolves, antelope,  
7 buffalo, and wild mustangs; the spring was visited by the Comanche  
8 and Shawnee, and it later became a campsite on the Santa Fe Trail;  
9 and

10 WHEREAS, Settled by buffalo hunters and ranchers in the  
11 1870s, the region became more populated after the arrival of the  
12 Texas and Pacific Railroad in 1880; the town of Big Spring grew up  
13 around a rail station that was located several miles from Sulphur  
14 Draw; in 1882, Howard County was established with Big Spring as its  
15 seat, and by 1884, the town had four general stores, six saloons,  
16 and a newspaper; and

17 WHEREAS, By 1920, Big Spring had become an important shipping  
18 junction for livestock, cotton, and grain; the discovery of oil in  
19 1926 led to rapid growth; during World War II, the Big Spring Army  
20 Air Corps Bombardier School trained more than 5,000 bombardiers;  
21 Webb Air Force Base was later established on the site, and after the  
22 base closed in 1977, ownership of the airfield reverted to the City  
23 of Big Spring; now known as McMahon-Wrinkle Airport/Airpark, the  
24 facility is a major catalyst for development in the area; and

1           WHEREAS, Today, cotton, cattle, and oil and gas production  
2 continue to undergird the diversified economy of Big Spring, in  
3 addition to the newer industries of composite manufacturing,  
4 telecommunications services, and plastics; the presence of four  
5 wind turbine farms has also made the region a leader in the  
6 production of green energy in Texas; in the city of Big Spring  
7 itself, the creation of the Downtown Historic District is spurring  
8 redevelopment, including the restoration of the famous Settles  
9 Hotel and the revitalization and beautification of the city's  
10 business district; and

11           WHEREAS, A vital nexus for health care services, Big Spring  
12 is home to the VA Medical Center, Scenic Mountain Medical Center,  
13 Howard County Mental Health Center, and Big Spring State Hospital,  
14 as well as the main offices of the West Texas VA Health Care System  
15 and the West Texas Centers for Mental Health and Mental  
16 Retardation; the area's schoolchildren are served by the Big  
17 Spring, Coahoma, and Forsan Independent School Districts, and  
18 postsecondary education is provided by Howard College and the  
19 Southwest Collegiate Institute for the Deaf; and

20           WHEREAS, Residents and visitors alike enjoy the fine  
21 recreational opportunities in the region; Big Spring State Park,  
22 capping a tall limestone bluff, offers striking views, and Moss  
23 Creek Lake affords enjoyable opportunities for camping, swimming,  
24 picnicking, and boating; the Heritage Museum tells the story of  
25 life in West Texas from the time of the Comanche to the oil boom,  
26 while the Hangar 25 Air Museum features aircraft exhibits; and

27           WHEREAS, Celebrating their rich history as they work to

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1 create a still brighter future, the people of Big Spring may take  
2 great pride in their heritage and their contribution to the  
3 prosperity of the Lone Star State; now, therefore, be it

4       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 81st Texas  
5 Legislature hereby recognize March 25, 2009, as Big Spring Area Day  
6 at the State Capitol and extend to the visiting delegation sincere  
7 best wishes for a meaningful and memorable stay in Austin.