

By: Gallego

H.R. No. 1309

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Proud citizens of Ward County are gathering in  
2 Austin on April 15, 2009, to celebrate Ward County Day at the State  
3 Capitol; and

4 WHEREAS, This area of the West Texas plains was once home to  
5 the Jumano and Comanche people, and Spanish explorers passed  
6 through the area in the 1580s; settlement increased after the Texas  
7 and Pacific Railway was built through the region in 1881, and in  
8 1887, the Texas Legislature took a portion of Tom Green County and  
9 designated it as Ward County, which is named in honor of Texas  
10 Independence hero Thomas W. Ward; and

11 WHEREAS, Organized in 1892, Ward County was home to nearly  
12 1,500 people by the turn of the 20th century; lacking a reliable  
13 water source in the arid surroundings, settlers depended on  
14 ranching more than farming during that era, though cotton  
15 cultivation became more common in the 1910s; and

16 WHEREAS, It was another commodity--petroleum--that provided  
17 the biggest boost to Ward County's prosperity; with the opening of  
18 productive oil fields beginning in 1926, the county entered a boom  
19 period and the population grew to more than 9,500 people by 1940;  
20 much of the growth was focused on the town of Monahans, and in 1939  
21 it became the county seat, inheriting the title from Barstow; and

22 WHEREAS, Today, oil and gas production remains an important  
23 part of the economy; the same is true of agricultural businesses,  
24 particularly cattle, goat, and horse ranches; in addition, tourism

1 helps to employ numerous county residents; area attractions include  
2 the Monahans Sandhills State Park, a showcase for the large sand  
3 dunes that are one of the county's most prominent geographical  
4 features, as well as the Million Barrel Museum and the Rattlesnake  
5 Bomber Base Museum; in addition, the county hosts popular events  
6 such as the Butterfield-Overland Stagecoach and Wagon Festival,  
7 which takes place each year in July; and

8       WHEREAS, Throughout its history, Ward County has made many  
9 notable contributions to the greatness of the Lone Star State, and  
10 its residents are indeed deserving of recognition on this special  
11 day; now, therefore, be it

12       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 81st Texas  
13 Legislature hereby recognize April 15, 2009, as Ward County Day at  
14 the State Capitol and extend to the visiting delegation sincere  
15 best wishes for an enjoyable and productive visit to Austin.