

By: Flynn

H.R. No. 1900

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, The State of Texas is renowned for the diversity of  
2 its animal population, and select species have become iconic  
3 symbols for certain cities and regions in the state; and

4           WHEREAS, Residents of the town of Ben Wheeler in Van Zandt  
5 County have come to enjoy an animal that has become a plentiful  
6 resident of the local area: the feral hog; and

7           WHEREAS, Often called wild hogs, these hardy creatures can  
8 trace their Texas lineage back to the 1680s, when Spanish colonists  
9 brought domesticated hogs into the area; the animals inevitably  
10 escaped their human owners from time to time and established packs  
11 in the wild; more recently, Eurasian wild boars were released in  
12 Texas in the 1900s for hunting purposes, and those that eluded the  
13 sportsmen likewise found a home in the wilderness and mated with the  
14 already existing feral swine; and

15           WHEREAS, Resourceful, fast-breeding, and able to eat almost  
16 anything, feral hogs have spread to nearly all parts of the state  
17 and have an estimated population of two million; while they can  
18 cause various kinds of agricultural and environmental damage, they  
19 are also a popular and challenging quarry for hunters, and this  
20 sport can have a sizable economic impact in certain areas; and

21           WHEREAS, East Texas has proven a favorite home for the hogs,  
22 and this is particularly true of the area around Ben Wheeler; the  
23 town has chosen to celebrate the presence of these quick-witted  
24 animals, and the feral hog image has already become strongly

1 associated with the community; and

2 WHEREAS, In 2008, residents staged the first annual Fall  
3 Feral Hawg Festival; the event drew some 5,000 people to enjoy a  
4 range of special activities, including the Hawg Queen Pageant, a  
5 parade, a feral hog barbecue cook-off, "kiss the pig" contests, and  
6 more; the festival takes place on the fourth weekend in October each  
7 year and offers a fun-filled tribute to the area's flat-snouted  
8 inhabitants; and

9 WHEREAS, Ben Wheeler's efforts to honor feral hogs and its  
10 proximity to the fertile habitats where they roam have given the  
11 community a special relationship with this distinctive animal, and  
12 this status is indeed deserving of special recognition; now,  
13 therefore, be it

14 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 81st Texas  
15 Legislature hereby recognize the feral hog as the mascot of the town  
16 of Ben Wheeler.