

By: Bonnen

H.C.R. No. 133

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, The lands and waters of Texas are home to a diverse
2 range of animals, and a select number of these species have been
3 recognized as official state symbols as a result of their
4 significance to our history and culture; and

5 WHEREAS, A particularly rich natural environment is found
6 along the Texas Gulf Coast, and of the many distinctive plants and
7 wildlife found in that region, the red drum (*Sciaenops ocellatus*)
8 is particularly deserving of recognition; and

9 WHEREAS, Also known as the redfish and the bull red, this
10 majestic saltwater fish spends the first three years of its life in
11 bays along the coast before heading into the open waters of the Gulf
12 of Mexico; it also demonstrates the hardiness and adaptability so
13 often found in the Lone Star State, swimming up rivers on occasion
14 and also taking up residence in certain inland reservoirs; and

15 WHEREAS, Perhaps the most distinctive characteristic of the
16 fish is its Texas-sized stature; at three years of age, the typical
17 red drum is two-and-a-half feet long and will grow larger over the
18 course of its long life; the biggest red drum caught in Texas waters
19 was 54.25 inches long and weighed nearly 60 pounds; and

20 WHEREAS, The fish's size, along with its power, speed, and
21 delicious flavor, has made it one of the most popular game species
22 in Texas waters; whether wading through the shallows, casting with
23 fly rods, or trying their luck in pier or surf fishing, anglers of
24 all types prize the red drum as a catch; as a result, the fish plays

1 an important role in boosting recreational tourism; and

2 WHEREAS, In decades past, redfish also helped drive the
3 state's commercial fishing industry and at times made up as much as
4 35 percent of its landings; overfishing and illegal netting took a
5 toll, however, and by the early 1980s the drum population had
6 dropped to dangerously low levels throughout the Gulf of Mexico;
7 fortunately, state officials responded to the situation by enacting
8 legislation and adopting wise management and enforcement measures,
9 including the development of a revolutionary hatchery; today,
10 numbers have rebounded to the point where the state has one of the
11 best red drum fisheries in the nation; and

12 WHEREAS, An environmental success story as well as an
13 awe-inspiring and much-sought-after resident of the Gulf Coast
14 waters, the red drum is a celebrated member of our natural world,
15 and it is indeed a fitting symbol of the Lone Star State; now,
16 therefore, be it

17 RESOLVED, That the 82nd Legislature of the State of Texas
18 hereby designate the red drum as the official State Saltwater Fish
19 of Texas.