

By: Pickett

H.R. No. 1168

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, The American cowboy has been the principal archetype  
2 of the West and of Texas in particular for more than 150 years, and  
3 the colorful tradition that the cowboy represents is truly  
4 deserving of celebration; and

5           WHEREAS, The first *vaqueros* were horseback-riding American  
6 Indians who tended the Spanish mission herds of the Southwest; in  
7 1598, Don Juan de Onate drove 7,000 head of cattle along the Rio  
8 Grande; soon *vaqueros* were regularly driving cattle from Texas to  
9 Mexico City, and their way of life eventually spread from Argentina  
10 to Canada; the word "cowboy" first appears in English in 1725, as a  
11 direct translation of *vaquero*, which was also Anglicized into  
12 "buckaroo"; and

13           WHEREAS, Cowboys have always lived in close communion with  
14 nature, learning to read and endure the extremes of weather; their  
15 specialized skills include riding, roping, branding, and herding,  
16 and they have also learned to train horses, turn simple ingredients  
17 into tasty and satisfying meals, and make repairs to their  
18 equipment and to themselves with only the materials at hand;  
19 although the typical working environment of the cowboy was  
20 dominated by men, many women performed difficult ranch work across  
21 the West, giving rise to the cowgirl, and in the later 19th century,  
22 entertainers such as Annie Oakley and rodeo riders such as Fannie  
23 Sperry Steele proved that women could ride, rope, and shoot as well  
24 as men; and

1           WHEREAS, The cowboy and his horse occupy a central place in  
2 the American imagination; he has been the hero of countless novels,  
3 from Owen Wister's *The Virginian* to Larry McMurtry's *Lonesome Dove*  
4 to Cormac McCarthy's *All the Pretty Horses*, and his image has been  
5 immortalized in the paintings and sculptures of Frederic Remington  
6 and Charles M. Russell; the Western is perhaps the most  
7 distinctively American of all movie genres, and the careers of  
8 stars such as John Wayne, Gary Cooper, James Stewart, Henry Fonda,  
9 and Clint Eastwood have all been dominated by their portrayals of  
10 cowboys; and

11           WHEREAS, Cowboys themselves have made their own distinctive  
12 contributions to culture, from such classic traditional songs as  
13 "The Streets of Laredo," "The Old Chisholm Trail," and "I Ride an  
14 Old Paint," to the works of cowboy poets such as Baxter Black, Red  
15 Steagall, and Steven Fromholz, who has served as the Poet Laureate  
16 of Texas; rodeo has grown from informal contests between cowboys  
17 into a professional sport enjoyed by 30 million people around the  
18 world, and the cowboy way of cooking has given rise to chuck wagon  
19 cuisine; and

20           WHEREAS, The multitude of organizations devoted to cowboy  
21 heritage continue to grow and thrive, including the Single Action  
22 Shooting Society, the Working Ranch Cowboys Association, the Cowboy  
23 Mounted Shooting Association, the Professional Rodeo Cowboys  
24 Association, the Women's Professional Rodeo Association, the U.S.  
25 Team Roping Championships, the Western Music Association, and many  
26 others; and

27           WHEREAS, The cowboy tradition transcends gender,

1 generations, ethnicity, geography, and politics, and at their best,  
2 the cowboy and the cowgirl represent strength, courage, and  
3 self-reliance; nowhere is this tradition more vibrant than in the  
4 Lone Star State, where the cowboys of today ride side by side with  
5 the ghosts of cowboys past, whose grit, good humor, and  
6 determination helped define what it means to be a Texan; now,  
7 therefore, be it

8         RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 83rd Texas  
9 Legislature hereby recognize July 27, 2013, as the National Day of  
10 the Cowboy in Texas.