

By: Price

H.R. No. 462

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, Proud residents of the Texas Panhandle are gathering  
2 in Austin on February 17, 2015, to celebrate Panhandle Day at the  
3 State Capitol, and this occasion offers a welcome opportunity to  
4 honor their region's rich heritage and many noteworthy features;  
5 and

6           WHEREAS, One of the oldest inhabited areas of Texas, the  
7 Panhandle is crossed by the Canadian and Red Rivers, rests over the  
8 southern tip of the Ogallala Aquifer, and offers breathtaking views  
9 of Palo Duro Canyon, the second-largest canyon in the country; its  
10 vast rolling plains were once roamed by Paleo-Indian hunters, long  
11 before Francisco Vazquez de Coronado became the first European to  
12 reach the area in 1541; it remained contested territory throughout  
13 much of its history, until the Compromise of 1850, when it assumed  
14 its modern boundaries; and

15           WHEREAS, Ranching became central to the Panhandle's culture  
16 and economy in the late 19th century; during this time, two of the  
17 area's major ranches were established: JA Ranch, which began in  
18 1876 when Charles Goodnight arrived with a herd of longhorn cattle  
19 from Colorado, and XIT Ranch, which was formed in the 1880s from  
20 three million acres of Panhandle land traded by the state to finance  
21 construction of a new Texas Capitol; the regional economy was  
22 further diversified with the advent of the railroads and dryland  
23 farming techniques, which led to a greater role for wheat and cotton  
24 farming, and the discovery of oil and natural gas in the 1920s;

1 today, the agriculture, oil and gas, and wind industries continue  
2 to be important to the region, and there are two large refining  
3 facilities, the Valero McKee Refinery in Sunray and the  
4 ConocoPhillips Refinery in Borger; and

5 WHEREAS, Amarillo, in Potter and Randall Counties, is an  
6 essential component of the prosperity of the Panhandle, with Tyson  
7 Foods, Bell Helicopter, Pantex, and multiple state-of-the-art  
8 health care systems all serving as major employers; in addition,  
9 the city is home to two major associations, the American Quarter  
10 Horse Association and the Texas Cattle Feeders Association; the  
11 nearby town of Canyon offers access to Palo Duro Canyon State Park,  
12 designated as one of "America's 10 Best State Parks" by *Fodor's*  
13 *Travel*, and is home to the long-running outdoor musical drama  
14 *Texas*, which chronicles the story of Panhandle settlers in the  
15 1800s; other notable communities include Pampa, the second-largest  
16 city in the Panhandle and a commercial center for oil and livestock,  
17 Dalhart, which hosts the annual XIT Rodeo and Reunion, and Dumas and  
18 Hereford, major centers for cattle feeding operations and beef  
19 processing plants; this area, known as Cattle-Feeding Country,  
20 supports a multibillion dollar industry with the largest  
21 proliferation of feedlots in the nation; and

22 WHEREAS, The Panhandle is home to such premier educational  
23 institutions as the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center,  
24 with its schools of medicine, pharmacy, and allied health sciences,  
25 and West Texas A&M University, both of which boast nationally  
26 recognized programs and faculty; Amarillo College continues to be  
27 among the finest community colleges in the country, and Wayland

1 Baptist University, Frank Phillips College, and Clarendon College  
2 also offer outstanding educational opportunities; and

3       WHEREAS, Visitors and residents alike enjoy a range of  
4 attractions, including a number of museums, such as the American  
5 Quarter Horse Museum and the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum,  
6 with over 2 million artifacts, along with such cultural assets as  
7 the Amarillo Museum of Art, the Lone Star Ballet, and the Amarillo  
8 Symphony; moreover, the adventurous can drive the length of the  
9 legendary Route 66 through Texas, starting in Glen Rio and passing  
10 through Amarillo's popular historic district before ending their  
11 journey in Shamrock; and

12       WHEREAS, Known for their hospitality, strong work ethic, and  
13 resilience, or, as Stratford's welcome sign proclaims, "God, Grass,  
14 and Grit," the citizens of the Texas Panhandle may take great pride  
15 in all they have done to make their region one of the treasures of  
16 the Lone Star State; now, therefore, be it

17       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 84th Texas  
18 Legislature hereby recognize February 17, 2015, as Panhandle Day at  
19 the State Capitol and extend to the visiting guests sincere best  
20 wishes for a meaningful and memorable stay in Austin.