

**SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 361**

**WHEREAS**, The members and sponsors of the Texas Bison Student Study Group have rendered an immeasurable public service through their work to promote the conservation and preservation of the legendary bison herd at Caprock Canyons State Park; and

**WHEREAS**, Once found in the millions across the Great Plains, the buffalo were all but exterminated by hunters in the 1870s and 1880s; a few, however, survived in small herds on private ranches, such as the group maintained by Charles Goodnight on the JA Ranch, largely at the encouragement of his wife, Mary Ann; during the decades when the Goodnights cared for the herd, it supplied stock for conservation efforts that succeeded in saving the species; in 1996, the owners of the JA Ranch donated the descendants of the Goodnight herd to the State of Texas, which relocated them to Caprock Canyons State Park; and

**WHEREAS**, The Texas Bison Student Study Group was organized on September 12, 2010, at Lucy Rede Franco Middle School by The STAR DAY Foundation of El Paso; this dynamic group is responsible for a number of initiatives that have raised the profile of the Caprock Canyons bison herd, fostered public appreciation for its importance, and contributed to its support; and

**WHEREAS**, Shortly after the formation of the study group, its members campaigned for the recognition of the Caprock Canyons herd as the official State Bison Herd of Texas, an objective that was achieved in 2011 when the 82nd Texas Legislature approved HCR 86; two years later, the 83rd Texas Legislature responded to further proposals by the study group and passed SCR 10 and HCR 51, designating September 12 and March 5 as Mary Ann "Molly" Goodnight Day and Charles Goodnight Day, respectively; and

**WHEREAS**, At the urging of the study group, The STAR DAY Foundation has established the Official State Bison Herd of Texas Fund, a permanent endowment intended to assist in the maintenance and improvement of the herd at Caprock Canyons; the fund was officially launched on the first Mary Ann "Molly" Goodnight Day, in 2013, and for its role in the creation of the fund, the study group was honored by then governor Rick Perry; and

**WHEREAS**, During the 84th legislative session, the study group sought to make the town of Quitaque, located near Caprock Canyons State Park and named for Charles Goodnight's Quitaque Ranch, the official Bison Capital of Texas, and SCR 22 successfully accomplished that goal; other study group proposals have led to the inauguration of the Mary Ann "Molly" Goodnight Library and Science Center Luncheon Seminar, held annually in Quitaque and sponsored by The STAR DAY Foundation, and to the development of the *Texas Bison Journal*, published on The STAR DAY Foundation website; and

**WHEREAS**, Through their many efforts to support the bison herd at Caprock Canyons State Park and to raise public awareness of its history and significance, members of the Texas Bison

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Student Study Group have proven fervent, effective advocates for the animal justly known as the Lord of the Plains, and they and all who have supported their endeavors may indeed take pride in their outstanding service to a worthy cause; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 85th Legislature, hereby recognize the Texas Bison Student Study Group for its efforts in behalf of the official State Bison Herd of Texas and extend to all those associated with the group sincere best wishes for continued success; and, be it further

**RESOLVED**, That a copy of this Resolution be prepared for the group as an expression of high regard from the Texas Senate.

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President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on March 6, 2017.

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Secretary of the Senate

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Member, Texas Senate