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By:  Price H.R. No. 246

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, On February 20 and 21, 2023, proud residents of the Texas Panhandle are visiting Austin for Panhandle Days at the State Capitol, a celebration of the rich heritage of this important region of the Lone Star State; and

WHEREAS, The striking landscape of the Panhandle ranges from the vast grasslands and open sky of the Llano Estacado to the breathtaking vistas of Palo Duro Canyon and the Caprock Escarpment to the gently undulating rolling plains of the southeast; the ancient Paleo-Indians once lived here, as did members of later indigenous cultures, and in 1541, when the explorer Francisco Vázquez de Coronado passed through the area, he found a rich rangeland, thick with buffalo and wildlife; and

WHEREAS, The Panhandle's distinctive shape results from boundaries that were established by the Compromise of 1850, and in the decades after the Civil War, pioneering cattlemen such as Charles Goodnight, James Adair, and Thomas Sherman Bugbee established enormous ranching empires; the arrival of the railroad in the late 1880s hastened the development of wheat and cotton farming, and the discovery of oil and natural gas in the 1920s further boosted and diversified the region's economy; and

WHEREAS, Today, the Panhandle continues to prosper from farming and from the oil, gas, and wind industries, and cattle-raising remains a multibillion-dollar business, with more feedlots in the region than anywhere else in the nation; Amarillo, the Panhandle's largest city, is home to such large employers as Xcel Energy, Tyson Foods, Bell Helicopter, Pantex, and several health care systems, as well as to the Texas Cattle Feeders Association and the Minor League Baseball team, the Amarillo Sod Poodles; Pampa, the second-largest city, is a thriving center for petroleum and livestock, and Dalhart boasts the annual XIT Rodeo and Reunion and the Hilmar Cheese Company; Sunray is home to a Valero refinery, while Dumas and Hereford are known for cattle feeding and beef processing enterprises; the town of Panhandle serves as the county seat of Carson County and is home to a National Blue Ribbon School, Panhandle Elementary School, and Borger is the site of a Phillips 66 refinery and a Nutrien nitrogen plant; and

WHEREAS, The Texas Panhandle is home to several renowned schools from K-12 grade schools to higher education institutions; six Texas Panhandle schools, including Happy High School, Vega Elementary School, Claude School, Gruver Elementary School, and Gruver Junior High School, were named top schools in the country and awarded the prestigious National Blue Ribbon School designation in 2022; the higher educational needs of the Panhandle's residents are served by the nationally recognized Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center and West Texas A&M University, as well as Amarillo College, Frank Phillips College, and Clarendon College; and

WHEREAS, The Panhandle features a variety of notable cultural and recreational attractions; Amarillo supports the Lone Star Ballet and the Amarillo Symphony, and the city's many museums include the American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame and Museum, the Don Harrington Discovery Center, the Texas Air and Space Museum, the Amarillo Railroad Museum, the Amarillo Museum of Art, and the Kwahadi Museum of the American Indian; the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum in Canyon houses more than two million artifacts that evoke the heritage of the region, while Palo Duro Canyon State Park hosts the outdoor musical drama *Texas*, which portrays the struggles and triumphs of area settlers in the 19th century; Dumas draws visitors from across the region for its Dogie Days every June, and Stratford, the county seat of Sherman County, hosts its popular Jamboree each July; and

WHEREAS, The people of the Texas Panhandle are blessed to live in a region of abundant natural resources and windswept beauty, and they may indeed take great pride in the important contributions they have made and continue to make to the history, culture, and prosperity of Texas; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 88th Texas Legislature hereby recognize February 20 and 21, 2023, as Panhandle Days at the State Capitol and extend to those attending the celebration sincere best wishes for a memorable and meaningful event.