

By: Smithee

H.R. No. 1478

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Preparations are underway across the country for the
2 centennial of Route 66; and

3 WHEREAS, In 1926, the Bureau of Public Roads established the
4 nation's first federal highway system; like other highways in the
5 system, Route 66 was composed of existing local, state, and
6 national roads; it quickly gained popularity through the efforts of
7 the U.S. 66 Highway Association, which advertised it as the most
8 scenic route from Chicago through St. Louis to Los Angeles; and

9 WHEREAS, Stretching 2,400 miles across two-thirds of the
10 continent, Route 66 spanned some 200 miles in Texas, with the
11 highway's geographical midpoint located in Adrian; the highway
12 became a catalyst for growth as entrepreneurs in towns along its
13 length established small businesses to serve travelers; commerce
14 increased when the Great Depression impelled many Americans to move
15 in search of better lives; although tourism declined significantly
16 during World War II, the highway's function as a military transport
17 corridor benefited motels, gas stations, and restaurants;
18 moreover, job seekers headed out on the road to join the defense
19 plant workforce on the West Coast; and

20 WHEREAS, Route 66 boomed in the post-war years as rationing
21 and travel restrictions vanished and car ownership expanded; the
22 freedom of the highway was lauded by Bobby Troup's big hit, "Route
23 66," and a television series of the same name raised its profile
24 further; during the Eisenhower administration, however, the advent

1 of the interstate system led to incremental replacement of U.S. 66
2 over the next three decades; in 1984, I-40 bypassed the last section
3 of the road, and the following year brought the official
4 decommissioning of Route 66; nevertheless, many Americans
5 understood the significance of the highway and organized groups to
6 encourage travel and preservation, and more than 150 miles of the
7 original route in Texas can still be driven today; since 1990, the
8 Old Route 66 Association of Texas has promoted tourism and
9 supported the restoration of signage and landmarks in collaboration
10 with local communities, tourism boards, business owners, and
11 museums; the Texas Legislature designated the state's segment as a
12 historic corridor, and in 2020, Congress established the Route 66
13 Centennial Commission in anticipation of celebrations; and

14 WHEREAS, A fabled roadway that shaped communities and
15 captured the national imagination, Route 66 continues to be a vital
16 economic and cultural artery as it approaches a momentous milestone
17 in its history; now, therefore, be it

18 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 89th Texas
19 Legislature hereby commemorate the centennial of Route 66 and
20 extend sincere best wishes to all those involved in preservation
21 efforts and celebrations; and, be it further

22 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
23 prepared for the Old Route 66 Association of Texas as an expression
24 of high regard by the Texas House of Representatives.