

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.C.R. 8
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AUTHOR'S/SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Legislature of the State of Texas is pleased to recognize the importance of the chuck wagon to the state's history and culture and to designate it as the official vehicle of Texas. The chuck wagon has been important in Texas since the great cattle drives that lasted from the end of the Civil War to the mid-1880s; during that period, approximately 10 million head of cattle were driven along trails all the way from Texas to railheads in Kansas, Missouri, Wyoming, and Canada. During the early days of the trail drives, a cowboy relied for survival strictly on what he could carry with him, experiencing hunger and discomfort.

In 1866, Texas rancher and Civil War veteran Charles Goodnight first used an army surplus Studebaker wagon on the trail drive; the Studebaker proved itself sturdy enough to withstand trail drives that could last up to five months.

Goodnight then designed and added a chuck box and a boot to the rear of his wagon. This innovation became the prototype for all future chuck wagons. The wagon's box was used to carry the cowboys' bedrolls, guns, personal effects, bulk food supplies, feed for the horses, and other supplies.

Today The American Chuck Wagon Association has 123 registered chuck wagons and over 200 members; the association's members are committed to restoring and maintaining chuck wagons with their own resources, which has ensured that the chuck wagon will continue to function as a viable tool on many of our Texas ranches and add to our state's historical and cultural charm.

RESOLVED

That the 79th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby acknowledge the important value of preserving the chuck wagon and designate the chuck wagon as the official vehicle of Texas.

That a copy of this resolution be prepared as an expression of esteem from the Texas Legislature.