

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center

S.C.R. 7  
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Enrolled

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

The life of the iconic Comanche leader Quanah Parker spanned the transition of his people from a traditional, nomadic, way of life to their acceptance of a settled existence in the late 19th century, and his leading role in this epic story is truly deserving of special recognition.

Known as the "Lords of the Plains" for their outstanding horsemanship, the Comanche were roving hunters and gatherers who dominated the Southern Plains of North America, including large portions of Texas. Individuals lived together in small bands and were free to join another group if they so desired. Although they once roamed the plains in numbers "like the stars," by the mid-19th century the Comanche were threatened by the United States policy of Manifest Destiny and the eradication by Anglo American hunters of the bison, which were both the Comanche's main food source and the center of their spiritual life.

Born either in Texas or Oklahoma sometime between 1845 and 1852, Quanah Parker was the son of Peta Nocona, a war chief of the Noconi band of the Comanche, and Cynthia Ann Parker, who had been captured by the Comanche while still a child and who adopted their way of life, spending 25 years with the tribe. After his father was killed and his mother captured in a fight with the Texas Rangers in 1860, Quanah took refuge with the Quahada Comanche of the Llano Estacado region.

Quanah Parker rose to become a powerful and influential chief among the Quahada, and for years he led the resistance to increased Anglo expansion in the Southern Plains. Under his direction, the Comanche eluded the Fourth United States Cavalry in 1871 and 1872, but in 1874, an alliance of Comanche and several other tribes under his leadership was defeated during a raid at Adobe Walls in the Texas Panhandle. A year later, Quanah Parker and the Quahada surrendered and settled on the Kiowa-Comanche reservation in Oklahoma, where he was appointed as the new chief of the tribe.

Leading by persuasion and example, Quanah Parker helped his people come to terms with their new existence. He promoted the creation of a ranching industry by working closely with Anglo ranchers, and as part of that effort, he negotiated a famous deal with the legendary Texas cattleman Charles Goodnight in 1878, permitting the JA Ranch to expand while providing beef for the Comanche. A herd of surviving bison was allowed to continue roaming the JA rangeland, and more than a century later, this arrangement helped lead to the creation of the official State Bison Herd of Texas, which now resides at Caprock Canyons State Park.

Quanah Parker's influence was also felt in other areas. He was a strong proponent of schooling for Comanche children and served on the tribal court and as the deputy sheriff of Lawton, Oklahoma. In time, he became a very successful rancher in his own right, and he remained a highly respected figure among the Comanche until his death in 1911.

During one of the greatest social and cultural shifts in American history, Quanah Parker served the Comanche people first as a warrior and then as a statesman, helping them retain their identity while adapting to a different way of life, and he stands as a pivotal figure in the history of the Lone Star State.

**RESOLVED**

That the 86th Legislature of the State of Texas designate the second Saturday in September as Quanah Parker Day.

That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 391.004(d) (relating to expiration of a designation), Government Code, this designation remain in effect until the 10th anniversary of the date this resolution is finally passed by the legislature.