

SENATE RESOLUTION No. 1857

A RESOLUTION recognizing the Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area.

WHEREAS, On May 30, 1854, with President Franklin Pierce's signature on the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the inhabitants of the newly formed territories were obliged to vote themselves into the Union as either slave or free. The Kansas-Nebraska Act nullified the Missouri Compromise of 1820 which allowed Missouri to enter the Union as a slave state but provided that all land east of the Rockies located north of the southern border of Missouri would be organized as free territories; and

WHEREAS, Threatened by the prospect of isolation, diminished congressional representation and the loss of labor that sustained the wealth and power of the minority planter class, southern politics flooded the territory with a determined interest to carry the "peculiar institution" into Kansas and beyond, hoping that "popular sovereignty" would carry their cause all the way across the continent to the Pacific Ocean; and

WHEREAS, Northern settlers were equally determined to bring their own beliefs and ideals west, and sought to bring Kansas into the Union as a Free State with free labor. The majority believed a free Kansas was about economic freedom and thus, the equality of Black Americans, which required constitutional amendments, was not at the heart of the debate; and

WHEREAS, As the whole world watched, "Bleeding Kansas" became the battleground for the soul of a Nation. Three months after Kansas was admitted into the union as a Free State in 1861, the Civil War began; and

WHEREAS, In January 2002, members of the Lawrence, Kansas City Commission and the Douglas County Commission appointed the Bleeding Kansas Heritage Area Committee to investigate the possibility of Lawrence and Douglas County applying for national heritage area designation to recognize our Free State heritage. On September 10, 2002, the committee recommended that the city and county proceed to seek such designation; and

WHEREAS, Recognizing the broad reach of the heritage area concept, members of the Douglas County Committee helped organize a Heritage Summit on January 30 and 31, 2003, in Lawrence, Kansas. Approximately 75 representatives from 20 Kansas and Missouri communities participated in the Summit which generated significant and unifying themes that could be used to organize the resources of a proposed National Heritage Area; and

WHEREAS, On February 13, 2003, a regional planning committee began holding regular monthly meetings consulting with the National Park Service, Midwest Regional Office. Two qualified historians were interviewed in August of 2003 and a National Heritage Area feasibility study was commissioned in September 2003 based on the theme of Bleeding Kansas and the Enduring Struggle for Freedom in eastern Kansas. A National Heritage Area is a place designated by the U.S. Congress where natural, cultural, historic and recreational resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally distinctive landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography. Development of National Heritage areas involves a strategy where citizens, government agencies, non-profit groups and private partners collaboratively plan and implement programs and projects to recognize, preserve, commemorate and celebrate America's defining landscapes as a whole. The feasibility study was completed in January of 2004; and

WHEREAS, On October 12, 2006, after four years of local work and with the full support from the Kansas/Missouri Congressional Delegation, the Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area was created; and

WHEREAS, The Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area is presently comprised of a total of 41 counties in eastern and southeastern Kansas and western Missouri. The 29 counties located in eastern and southeastern Kansas include: Allen, Anderson, Atchison, Bourbon, Chautauqua, Cherokee, Clay, Coffey, Crawford, Douglas, Franklin, Geary, Jackson, Jefferson, Johnson, Labette, Leavenworth, Linn, Miami, Montgomery, Neosho, Osage, Pottawatomie, Riley, Shawnee, Wabaunsee, Wilson, Woodson and Wyandotte. In western Missouri, the Heritage Area includes the counties of Buchanan, Platte, Clay, Ray, Lafayette, Jackson, Cass, Johnson, Bates, Vernon, Barton and St. Clair; and

WHEREAS, The Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area seeks to raise local, regional, national and international awareness of our shared heritage with support from and in partnership with the National Park Service. Its goals include: Strengthening partnerships to preserve, promote and educate; providing access to new resources for stewardship of our culture; enhancing and developing historic sites and landscapes; and utilizing heritage to stimulate economic development opportunity. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate of the State of Kansas: That the Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area reflects traditions, customs, beliefs and folk life that are a valuable part of the heritage of the United States and that the Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area provides outstanding opportunities to conserve natural, cultural and historic features; and

Be it further resolved: That we urge the United States Congress to work towards recognizing the Bleeding Kansas National Heritage Area; and

Be it further resolved: That the Secretary of the Senate provide 50 enrolled copies of this resolution to Senator Derek Schmidt.

Senate Resolution No. 1857 was sponsored by Senators D. Schmidt, Allen, Apple, Barnett, Barone, Brownlee, Francisco, Gilstrap, Haley, Hensley, Jordan, Kelly, Lynn, Pine, Pyle, Reitz, V. Schmidt, Steinger, Taddiken, Umbarger, Vratil and Wilson.

I hereby certify that the above RESOLUTION originated in the SENATE, and was adopted by that body

President of the Senate.

Secretary of the Senate.