

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.C.R. 29
By: Miles
State Affairs
5/28/2021
Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Members of the Texas Geographic Names Committee and the United States Board on Geographic Names (USBGN) have issued a report which shows that there are at least 28 geographic features in Texas with racially offensive names. In 1991, the Texas Legislature passed H.B. 1756, relating to the elimination of certain racially offensive names of geographic features. The act requires the renaming of any geographic feature with a name containing the word "Negro," yet in the 30 years since the law was passed, 17 of the 19 place names detailed in the act remain unchanged. Changes to place names require the approval of USBGN, which in 1998 rejected the names proposed by H.B. 1756. However, the names were submitted for reconsideration at a recent meeting of the USBGN and will be considered for validation and acceptance no later than June 2021.

In addition to those currently under reconsideration, the USBGN has identified 11 other place names in Texas containing the slur, in contravention of Section 3 of H.B. 1756. There are currently no proposals to change these names, and the board's protocol requires that a formal proposal be submitted in order to consider any changes. The board encourages Texas to seek proponents to submit a proposal for each of these names. The perpetuation of racially offensive language is a stain on the Lone Star State, and it is vital that the names of these geographic features be changed in order to reflect and honor the diversity of the population. Expressing commitment to eliminating racially offensive place names and urging the U.S. Board on Geographic Names to approve requests to change racially offensive names of geographic features.

RESOLVED

That the 87th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby urge USBGN to approve requests to change racially offensive place names in accordance with Texas H.B. 1756.