

HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 6024

A RESOLUTION proclaiming and celebrating the sesquicentennial of the community of
Baxter Springs, Kansas.

WHEREAS, Baxter Springs once was a rest stop for the Osage Indians as they traveled toward their summer hunting grounds. Members of this tribe paused at the mineral springs that once flowed near the town. They believed that the water had miraculous healing properties, and they routed their trek purposely to partake of the flowing springs; and

WHEREAS, In the spring of 1849 the Reverend John J. Baxter, his wife and eight children moved from Missouri to 160 acres of land near Spring River. His land included one of the mineral springs that the Osage Indians would visit. John Baxter set up and operated an inn and general store which came to be known as “Baxter’s Place”. “Baxter’s Place” became known as Baxter Springs after Reverend Baxter was gunned down in a property dispute in 1859. It was formerly incorporated as a city in the relatively new state of Kansas in 1868; and

WHEREAS, Fort Blair, also referred to as Fort Baxter, was established in 1862 to protect against the frequent attacks from Confederate forces during the Civil War. In 1863, Confederates under the command of William Quantrill massacred nearly 100 Union soldiers who were subsequently buried in the Baxter Springs Cemetery; and

WHEREAS, Following the Civil War, Baxter Springs became known far and wide as one of the wildest cowtowns of the West. Drovers, bringing herds of cattle northward from Texas to Missouri, found the town a welcome respite after three or four months on the dusty trail. Leaving the longhorn cattle to feed on the lush grasses of the prairie in Indian Territory, the drovers made the most of the numerous saloons and other attractions of what is now known as “The First Cowtown in Kansas”; and

WHEREAS, Around 1876, during the period of hard times for the community, it was discovered that the mineral springs had wonderful health-giving properties and Baxter Springs became a famous health spa. Spring Park was a popular gathering spot; and

WHEREAS, With the discovery of lead and zinc in the Tri-State district, Baxter Springs became a prosperous business center. The demise of mining left its mark, but unlike many other less fortunate communities, the community of Baxter Springs recovered through the diversification of business, agriculture and industry to become one of the most attractive and progressive communities in the area: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of Kansas: That we do hereby proclaim the week of June 28 through July 5, 2008, as the sesquicentennial anniversary of the community of Baxter Springs, Kansas; that we celebrate the rich legacy, progress, and achievements of Baxter Springs; and that we honor those who helped shape the direction and future of the community.

House Resolution No. 6024 was sponsored by Representative Doug Gatewood.

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

Speaker of the House.

Chief Clerk of the House.