

**[DISCUSSION DRAFT]**

112<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
1<sup>ST</sup> SESSION

**H. RES.** \_\_\_\_\_

Condemning Texas Governor Rick Perry for using a secluded West Texas hunting camp as a place to host lawmakers, friends and supporters on hunting trips at a place known by the name painted in block letters across a large, flat rock standing upright at its gated entrance called “Niggerhead”.

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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

M. \_\_\_\_\_ submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on \_\_\_\_\_

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**RESOLUTION**

Condemning Texas Governor Rick Perry for using a secluded West Texas hunting camp as a place to host lawmakers, friends and supporters on hunting trips at a place known by the name painted in block letters across a large, flat rock standing upright at its gated entrance called “Niggerhead”.

Whereas Governor Rick Perry has described a childhood in Haskell County in Paint Creek, Texas, as centered on Boy Scouts, school, and church;

Whereas Texas Governor Rick Perry is from West Texas and was originally a Southern Democrat – often known as

Dixiecrats – who switched parties in the late 1980s to become a Republican and is currently a leading Republican presidential candidate;

Whereas ranchers who once grazed cattle on the 1,070-acre parcel in Throckmorton County on the Clear Fork of the Brazos River – near where Governor Perry was raised in Paint Creek, Texas – it has since become a hunting ground that was called by the name “Niggerhead” well before Governor Perry and his father, Ray, began hunting there in the early 1980s even though there is no definitive account of when the rock first appeared on the property;

Whereas Ronnie Brooks, a local resident who guided a few turkey shoots for Governor Perry between 1985 and 1990, said he holds Governor Perry “in the highest esteem” but said this of the rock at the camp: “It kind of offended me, truthfully”;

Whereas Haskell County Judge David Davis, sitting in his courtroom and looking at a window there, said the word was “like those are vertical blinds. It’s just what it was called. There was no significance other than a hunting deal”;

Whereas the name of this particular parcel did not change for years and for many remained the same after it became associated with Rick Perry, first as a private citizen, then as a State official, and finally as Texas Governor;

Whereas some local residents still call it “Niggerhead”;

Whereas as recently as this summer, the slab-like rock – lying flat, portions of the name still faintly visible beneath a coat of white paint – remained by the gated entrance to the camp;

Whereas asked last week about the name, Governor Perry said the word on the rock is an offensive name that has no place in the modern world – implying that it may have been okay and had an appropriate place in that community when he was growing up;

Whereas Mae Lou Yeldell has lived in Haskell County, Texas, for 70 years and recalls the racism she faced in the 1950s and 1960s in West Texas, when being called an offensive name – like Whites greeting Blacks with “Morning nigger” – was “like a broken record”;

Whereas Throckmorton County, where the hunting camp is located near Haskell County, was for years considered a virtual no-go zone for African-Americans because of old stories told by locals about the lynching of an African-American man there;

Whereas Haskell County began observing Martin Luther King Jr. Day just two years ago according to a county commissioner in Haskell County;

Whereas Governor Perry grew up in a segregated era whose history has defined and complicated the careers of many Southern politicians;

Whereas Governor Perry has spoken often about how his upbringing in this sparsely populated farming community influenced his conservatism;

Whereas Governor Perry says he mentioned the offensive word on the rock to his parents shortly after they had signed a lease and he had visited the property, and they rather immediately painted over the word during the next July 4 holiday, but seven people interviewed by the Washington Post said they still saw the word on the rock at various points during the years that the Perry family

was associated with the property through his father, partners, or his signature on a lease;

Whereas another local resident who visited the property with Governor Perry and the legislators he brought there to go hunting recalled seeing the rock with the name clearly visible;

Whereas how, when, or whether Governor Perry dealt with it when he was using the property isn't clear and adds a dimension to the emerging biography of Governor Perry who quickly moved into the top tier of Republican presidential candidates when he entered the race in August; and

Whereas Herman Cain is the only Republican presidential candidate to criticize Governor Rick Perry for being "insensitive" when the word was not immediately condemned, but we would remind Herman Cain that the word is not only "insensitive", but is also "offensive": Now, therefore, be it

1       *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2               (1) calls on Governor Rick Perry to apologize  
3       for not immediately doing away with the rock that  
4       contained the word "Niggerhead" at the entrance of  
5       a ranch he was leasing and on which he was taking  
6       friends, colleagues, and supporters to hunt;

7               (2) calls on Governor Rick Perry's presidential  
8       rivals, who have not yet make strong statements of  
9       outrage over the rock that contained the word, to do  
10      so;

1           (3) calls upon Governor Rick Perry to condemn  
2           the use of this word as being totally offensive and  
3           inappropriate at anytime and anyplace in United  
4           States history; and

5           (4) calls upon Governor Rick Perry to list the  
6           names of all lawmakers, friends, and financial sup-  
7           porters he took with him on his hunting trips at  
8           “Niggerhead”.