

HR 9101

2014

1 House Resolution

2 A resolution commending Captain Bill Smith for being
3 the first to catch a bonefish (*albula vulpes*) on an
4 artificial fly 75 years ago.

5
6 WHEREAS, the species *albula vulpes*, or "grey ghost," is a
7 gorgeous fish, being generally the color of burnished silver
8 with a slightly bluish-olive back, fading to almost white below,
9 and is referred to with reverence throughout the Florida Keys as
10 the bonefish, and

11 WHEREAS, in addition to its beauty, the majestic bonefish
12 is a wily adversary when hunted and a prodigious fighter when
13 engaged, with estimates of its speed ranging from 25 to 40 miles
14 per hour, which allows this speedy fish to cover the length of a
15 football field in a matter of seconds, and

16 WHEREAS, the elusive bonefish was never known to have been
17 intentionally taken on an artificial fly until one sunny
18 afternoon in the summer of 1939 when, after having considered
19 the problem for many months, Captain Bill Smith fastened an
20 artificial fly of his own devising to the end of a leader
21 attached to a tapered Ashaway GAF line wound on a Shakespeare
22 #1891 single-action Russell reel, and

23 WHEREAS, among the mud flats near the Islamorada Little
24 Basin, a deeply forked tail waving gently above the water
25 revealed the presence of an 8-pound bonefish, and under a bright

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26 | blue sky with fleecy white clouds overhead, Captain Bill Smith
27 | used a 9 1/2-foot Orvis Battenkill rod to present the handmade
28 | fly to the fish, and

29 | WHEREAS, some minutes later, that noble bonefish made
30 | history as the first of the species *albula vulpes* to be caught
31 | on an artificial fly, and

32 | WHEREAS, the accomplishment of Captain Bill Smith in taking
33 | this historic fish in such a manner initiated what many claim to
34 | be the most exciting form of sportfishing, pound for pound, on
35 | the face of the globe and founded a multimillion-dollar
36 | industry: fly fishing for bonefish, NOW, THEREFORE,

37 |
38 | Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of
39 | Florida:

40 |
41 | That on the 75th anniversary of the unprecedented feat of
42 | catching a bonefish on an artificial fly, Captain Bill Smith is
43 | recognized and commended for contributing greatly to the name
44 | and reputation of Islamorada and the Florida Keys as a
45 | fisherman's paradise.