

Congressional Resolution

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Senate

SMITHVILLE FIDDLERS' JAMBOREE

Senator Fred Thompson – R Tennessee

Mr. THOMPSON:

Mr. President, I rise today to acknowledge and honor an event that has long been a source of great civic pride for many of us in Tennessee: the Smithville Fiddlers' Jamboree and Crafts Festival.

A spectacular 2-day event held annually over the Fourth of July holiday, the Smithville Fiddlers' Jamboree is dedicated to the furtherance and preservation of old-time Appalachian country music, dance, and authentic Appalachian art and culture. The jamboree and I go a long way back, and yet I never cease to be amazed by the hospitality, the fellowship, the crafts, and, of course, the outstanding music.

This past Fourth of July weekend marked the 26th anniversary of the jamboree. It all began back on July 1, 1972, when musicians from 16 states delighted an audience of 8,000 people.

While that in itself was quite an accomplishment, the event's founders were not content to stop there. By comparison, this year's event drew a record crowd of 125,000 and featured more than 600 contestants from 42 States and 4 foreign countries. More than 300 artisans and craftsmen were on hand to sell and display authentic pioneer and contemporary Appalachian crafts.

These days, the Smithville Fiddlers' Jamboree is broadcast on television worldwide and has been featured in National Geographic Traveler, Southern Living, and several other national publications. The Jamboree has been named one of the top 100 tourist events in North America, according to a list compiled by the American Bus Association. The event was selected as a 'Top 20 Tourist Favorite' by the Southeast Tourism Society, which includes the States of Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, and Virginia. Earlier this year, the Tennessee General Assembly passed a resolution designating the Smithville Fiddlers' Jamboree and Crafts Festival as the official jamboree and crafts festival of the State of Tennessee.

Without a doubt, knowledge of the Smithville Jamboree's accomplished musicians, inspiring music, skilled artisans, and authentic crafts has now reached the four corners of the globe, and I applaud the organizers, committees, volunteers, and the people of Smithville and DeKalb County, TN, for their unique and substantial contribution to the rich tradition of Appalachian art and culture.