

House Resolution 1088

By: Representative Meadows of the 5<sup>th</sup>

#### A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the Georgia String Band Festival as the official string band festival of Georgia;  
2 and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, old-time string band music was the most prevalent form of folk music in the  
4 United States before World War II and during the Great Depression of the 1920s and 1930s;  
5 and

6 WHEREAS, old-time string band music was performed by local groups in local styles, has  
7 traditional song structures, and was then the music of hearth, home, and farmstead, including  
8 in the Piedmont and Appalachian regions; and

9 WHEREAS, this infectious music was spread throughout the country through radio  
10 broadcasting and the revolutionary medium of commercial recording; and

11 WHEREAS, beginning in the 1920s, Calhoun and Gordon County, Georgia, home to  
12 numerous accomplished old-time string band performers, celebrated old-time string band  
13 music with the Gordon County Fiddlers' Convention, an open musical competition attracting  
14 approximately 5,000 people to downtown Calhoun in those years, lifting morale in an  
15 agricultural region hard hit by economic adversity; and

16 WHEREAS, Harry Smith's *Anthology of American Folk Music*, released in 1952 and now  
17 considered one of the most influential collections of musical recordings of the 20th Century,  
18 included classic pre-war recordings of Gordon County's own Andrew and Jim Baxter; and

19 WHEREAS, the music in Smith's *Anthology* sparked and informed the folk music movement  
20 to which is owed American cultural touchstones like Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, and Peter, Paul  
21 and Mary; and

22 WHEREAS, in the years around World War II, economic and societal forces caused mass  
23 migration and other changes among the population of the United States, catalyzing the  
24 transformation of traditional string band music into the modern genres of bluegrass, jazz,  
25 western swing, and country and western; and

26 WHEREAS, in 2007, the Calhoun Gordon Arts Council revived the practice of a local  
27 old-time string band music celebration with the Georgia String Band Festival, located at the  
28 Harris Arts Center in downtown Calhoun, Georgia, by inviting nationally renowned old-time  
29 string band musicians to perform and reviving the day-long Gordon County Fiddlers'  
30 Convention with contests highlighting singing, buck dancing, banjo picking, string band  
31 performances, and fiddling; and

32 WHEREAS, the Calhoun Gordon Arts Council celebrates this proud musical heritage and  
33 continues to hold the festival at the Harris Arts Center, where it serves as a yearly celebration  
34 of the beautiful tradition of old-time string band music and Georgia's rich cultural history.

35 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that  
36 the members of this body recognize the Georgia String Band Festival as the official string  
37 band festival of Georgia.

38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized  
39 and directed to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to the  
40 public and the press.