

Reps. Sheltroun, Lemmons, III, Farrah, Accavitti, Mayes, Lemmons, Jr., Gillard, Cushingberry, Stahl and Kathleen Law offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 141.

A resolution recognizing Oscoda, Michigan as the true birthplace of the legend of Paul Bunyan as first set in ink by James MacGillivray.

Whereas, The lumberjack Paul Bunyan is recognized as the greatest of all American folk heroes; and

Whereas, The legend of Paul Bunyan is rooted, in part, on historical records. Historians recognize the basis of the legend of Paul Bunyan surrounds the exploits of Fabian “Joe” Fournier, a French-Canadian logger who was born in Quebec, Canada, around 1845; and

Whereas, Fabian Fournier moved to Michigan following the Civil War because higher wages could be earned from logging in Michigan than similar work in Canada. Fabian Fournier was hired as the foreman of a logging crew. He was exceedingly large and strong, and soon earned a reputation as the top logger in the state; and

Whereas, Fabian Fournier worked for the H.M. Loud Company. Camp stories regarding his rough life developed into legend following his murder in the autumn of 1875; and

Whereas, James MacGillivray, who also once worked for the H.M. Loud Company, published the stories in 1906 while he was employed as a newspaper reporter with the Oscoda Press. Mr. MacGillivray renamed Fabian Fournier as “Paul Bunyan” based on a mythical character of the same name arising from the French-Canadian Papineau Rebellion of 1837; and

Whereas, The tales James MacGillivray wrote in Oscoda were republished in 1910 as an expanded article for the Detroit News. These stories were later published in the poem “The Round River Drive” which appeared in 1914 in the American Lumberman; and

Whereas, The Paul Bunyan story received national exposure and exaggerations and tall tales of James MacGillivray’s character increased with every subsequent telling; and

Whereas, The legend of Paul Bunyan has endured the test of time. Many current and former logging towns across the United States now claim to be the home of Paul Bunyan; now therefore be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That the members of this legislative body recognize Oscoda, Michigan as the true birthplace of the legend of Paul Bunyan as first set in ink by James MacGillivray based on the life of logger Fabian Fournier, and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Library of Congress, the Library of Michigan, the Michigan Historical Archives, and the Charter Townships of Oscoda and Au Sable in Iosco County, Michigan.