

1 State of Arkansas
2 92nd General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2019
4

A Bill

SENATE BILL 557

5 By: Senators Teague, Hickey
6 By: Representative Watson
7

For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO DESIGNATE WASHINGTON, ARKANSAS, AS THE
10 BIRTHPLACE OF THE BOWIE KNIFE, ARKANSAS HERITAGE
11 SITE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
12
13

Subtitle

15 TO DESIGNATE WASHINGTON, ARKANSAS, AS THE
16 BIRTHPLACE OF THE BOWIE KNIFE, ARKANSAS
17 HERITAGE SITE.
18
19

20 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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22 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 1, Chapter 4, is amended to add an
23 additional section to read as follows:

24 1-4-134. Birthplace of the Bowie Knife, Arkansas Heritage Site –
25 Legislative findings and intent.

26 (a) The General Assembly finds that:

27 (1) The Bowie knife has been designated the official knife of
28 the State of Arkansas;

29 (2) The Bowie knife is recognized as Arkansas's most famous
30 blade weapon and the national American Blade;

31 (3) Arkansas blacksmith James H. Black crafted an original Bowie
32 knife in Washington, Hempstead County, Arkansas, in 1830;

33 (4) Washington, Arkansas, and James H. Black became almost
34 immediately famous as the birthplace and creator of the Bowie knife,
35 respectively;

36 (5) James H. Black continued to refine and improve his Bowie



1 knife design into the world's toughest but most flexible knife from his shop
2 in Washington, Arkansas; and

3 (6) Because of the Bowie knife's national reputation,
4 Washington, Arkansas, later became the location of the world's first
5 recognized school of bladesmithing.

6 (b)(1) Washington, Hempstead County, Arkansas, is designated the
7 "Birthplace of the Bowie Knife, Arkansas Heritage Site".

8 (2) The designation of Washington, Hempstead County, Arkansas,
9 as the "Birthplace of the Bowie Knife, Arkansas Heritage Site" is essential
10 to:

11 (A) Celebrate, protect, and preserve the history and
12 status of the Arkansas-created Bowie knife throughout Arkansas, the United
13 States, and the world; and

14 (B) Preserve bladesmithing history and heritage, promote
15 heritage arts and bladesmithing tourism in the area, and provide a
16 historically accurate site designation for a heritage arts and bladesmithing
17 enthusiast.

18 (c) The University of Arkansas Community College at Hope-Texarkana is
19 designated to develop and operate a school of bladesmithing located in
20 Washington, Arkansas, to promote and protect the art of bladesmithing and the
21 Bowie Knife crafted there.

22 (d)(1) The Arkansas Department of Transportation, in consultation with
23 the Department of Parks and Tourism and the University of Arkansas Community
24 College at Hope-Texarkana, shall design a sign that displays the words and
25 any logo for the "Birthplace of the Bowie Knife, Arkansas Heritage Site".

26 (2) The sign shall be placed on or about the location of the
27 school of bladesmithing developed and operated in Washington, Arkansas, by
28 the University of Arkansas Community College at Hope-Texarkana.

29 (3) Information regarding the proper placement of copies of the
30 sign at additional locations to promote and direct tourism to Washington,
31 Arkansas, shall be made available by the Arkansas Department of
32 Transportation.

33 (4) The sign in appropriate scale shall be used as the symbol on
34 the state highway map and in all tourism mediums published by the Department
35 of Parks and Tourism to indicate "Birthplace of the Bowie Knife, Arkansas
36 Heritage Site".