

By: Morales Shaw

H.R. No. 1726

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Johnny Mata, a longtime advocate for police reform
2 in the Houston area, has dedicated his life to standing up for the
3 civil rights and civil liberties of all members of society; and

4 WHEREAS, The son of Mexican immigrants, Mr. Mata was raised
5 by his father in Houston's Second Ward after his mother passed away;
6 he held various jobs in his youth, and after serving in the U.S.
7 Army, he took a job that involved conducting surveys to help
8 residents of disadvantaged neighborhoods to find employment; the
9 job served as his introduction to community work, and he ultimately
10 spent more than three decades as a staff member with the Gulf Coast
11 Community Services Association; he also joined the League of United
12 Latin American Citizens and became involved in civil rights issues;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, In the course of his responsibilities with LULAC,
15 Mr. Mata sought justice for Joe Campos Torres, a Vietnam veteran
16 who was killed by Houston police officers in 1977; after the
17 officers received light sentences for the crime, a series of
18 protests took place, and the widespread outrage in the community
19 ultimately sparked the Moody Park Riot the following year; and

20 WHEREAS, Although frustrated by the lack of accountability
21 over the murder of Joe Campos Torres, Mr. Mata resolved to continue
22 fighting for justice; over the years, he sought to focus attention
23 on civil rights violations, especially those committed by law
24 enforcement, and he has continued his involvement with LULAC for

1 some 40 years, serving as the organization's state director and
2 holding several local positions; he currently leads the Greater
3 Houston Coalition for Justice, and he worked with lawmakers to
4 achieve passage of House Bill 2150 during the 84th Texas
5 Legislature in 2015, which helped reform the process of selecting
6 grand jurors; in 2020, he was appointed as a special advisor to the
7 Mayor's Task Force on Policing Reform; and

8 WHEREAS, Johnny Mata has made a profound impact through his
9 decades-long engagement in the struggle for equal justice, and he
10 is indeed deserving of recognition for all that he has done to
11 protect civil rights and advance progressive reforms; now,
12 therefore, be it

13 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 88th Texas
14 Legislature hereby honor Johnny Mata for his many years of service
15 to the Houston community and extend to him sincere best wishes for
16 the future; and, be it further

17 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
18 prepared for Mr. Mata as an expression of high regard by the Texas
19 House of Representatives.