

By: Pena

H.R. No. 1698

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The renaming of the Edinburg Consolidated
2 Independent School District's (CISD) Southeast Elementary School
3 to the Dr. Thomas Esparza Elementary School offers a fitting
4 opportunity to remember the life and accomplishments of this
5 Edinburg educator, coach, and civic leader who died on August 3,
6 2001, at the age of 80; and

7 WHEREAS, Born on May 21, 1921, in Edinburg, Dr. Esparza
8 graduated from Edinburg High School, where he lettered in three
9 sports, and joined the U.S. Naval Air Corps and played top service
10 baseball and football; after World War II, Dr. Esparza earned his
11 bachelor of science degree and master of education degree from
12 Texas A&I University in Kingsville; years later, in 1977, he
13 received his Ph.D. from Clayton University in St. Louis, Missouri;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, Dr. Esparza taught and coached for 20 years at
16 Edinburg CISD schools; he spent another 15 years at Pan American
17 University, where he built a commuter intramural program and served
18 as director of intramural sports; and

19 WHEREAS, One of the first Hispanic coaches in South Texas,
20 Dr. Esparza won more than 500 games throughout his career; he
21 coached the first American Legion championship team, winning 11
22 American Legion championships in total, and he helped to coach the
23 first high school baseball team from the valley to attend the state
24 tournament; and

1 WHEREAS, This distinguished man initiated the Field Day
2 Sports Program in the Edinburg school district, started the Panocha
3 Bread Cookoff, which is continued today by the American Legion Post
4 No. 408, and organized the annual Juneteenth Celebration in
5 Edinburg; one of the founders of the Rio Grande Valley Sports Hall
6 of Fame, he ensured the organization had a constitution as well as
7 tax-exempt status, and in 1991 Dr. Esparza was inducted into the RGV
8 Hall of Fame; and

9 WHEREAS, Dr. Esparza made young people into champions, and
10 the positive influence he had on the Edinburg community, embodied
11 by the school which now bears his name, will undoubtedly be of
12 lasting benefit to his fellow Texans; now, therefore, be it

13 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 78th Texas
14 Legislature hereby pay special tribute to the life of Dr. Thomas
15 Esparza and recognize the many contributions he made to his South
16 Texas community; and, be it further

17 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
18 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of
19 Representatives adjourns this day it do so in memory of Dr. Thomas
20 Esparza.