

By: Alonzo

H.R. No. 1774

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Benito Juárez, who was instrumental in bringing
2 sweeping changes to Mexican government and society during the
3 mid-19th century, was born on March 21, 1806; and

4 WHEREAS, A Zapotec Indian and native of Oaxaca, Sr. Juárez
5 was a teenager when he gained the patronage of the family in whose
6 home his sister was working as a servant; tutored privately at
7 first, he graduated from the Franciscan seminary in Oaxaca in 1827
8 and received a law degree from the Institute of Science and Art in
9 1834; and

10 WHEREAS, Sr. Juárez was attracted to politics at an early age
11 and spent virtually all of his adult life either in government or
12 waging opposition; he served as a city councilman for Oaxaca from
13 1831 to 1833, during which time he strongly supported Indian
14 rights, and in the 1840s he served as a civil judge and federal
15 deputy; from 1847 to 1852 he held the governorship of Oaxaca; and

16 WHEREAS, Driven into exile when Antonio López de Santa Anna
17 came to power in 1853, Sr. Juárez joined the successful
18 revolutionary movement against him; after Santa Anna himself was
19 forced into exile, Sr. Juárez became minister of justice; while
20 serving in that post he was responsible for a law that limited the
21 jurisdiction of church courts to ecclesiastical cases; and

22 WHEREAS, After serving again as governor of Oaxaca, Sr.
23 Juárez became minister of the interior in November 1857 and the next
24 month took office as chief justice of the Supreme Court; when a

1 military coup deposed the government, he declared himself
2 president, in accordance with the constitutional line of
3 succession, and led the victorious resistance to the usurpers in
4 the Reform War of 1858-1861; and

5 WHEREAS, Sr. Juárez assumed the presidency officially in
6 1861; soon, however, he found himself fighting the French, who
7 captured Mexico City in 1863 and set up a puppet regime; once again
8 Sr. Juárez and his troops prevailed, with the United States clearly
9 favoring their cause, and in 1867 he was again elected president;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, Plagued with numerous difficulties throughout his
12 final term, Sr. Juárez died in office on July 17, 1872; in 1888, the
13 city of El Paso del Norte was renamed Ciudad Juárez in his honor;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, Notwithstanding the difficulties of his final
16 years, Benito Juárez remains a towering figure in the history of
17 Mexico; he was instrumental in the transfer of political power from
18 creoles to mestizos, in asserting the authority of civil law, and in
19 preserving the nation's autonomy in the face of foreign invasion,
20 and it is a privilege to honor the memory of this national hero;
21 now, therefore, be it

22 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 78th Texas
23 Legislature hereby pay special tribute to the life of the esteemed
24 Mexican statesman Benito Juárez on March 21, 2004, the 198th
25 anniversary of his birth.