

1-1 By: Madla S.C.R. No. 37
1-2 (In the Senate - Filed April 1, 2003; April 7, 2003, read
1-3 first time and referred to Committee on International Relations and
1-4 Trade; April 28, 2003, reported favorably by the following vote:
1-5 Yeas 4, Nays 0; April 28, 2003, sent to printer.)

1-6 SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1-7 WHEREAS, In 1962, Pub. L. No. 87-525 authorized the
1-8 construction of an international bridge across the Rio Grande to
1-9 join Heath Canyon in Texas with the village of La Linda, Coahuila,
1-10 Mexico, for the purpose of transporting refined ore into the United
1-11 States from nearby mills in Mexico and to one day facilitate the
1-12 movement of tourists interested in visiting the Sierra del Carmen
1-13 mountain areas across from Big Bend National Park; and

1-14 WHEREAS, Since the bridge was constructed, the Texas
1-15 Department of Transportation has, without interruption, maintained
1-16 Farm-to-Market Road 2627 as a paved two-lane highway for a 28-mile
1-17 stretch connecting the bridge to United States Highway 385, which
1-18 leads from that junction southward to Big Bend National Park and
1-19 northward 40 miles to Marathon and United States Highway 90; and

1-20 WHEREAS, La Linda Bridge, also known as the Hallie Stillwell
1-21 Memorial Bridge, is still in place and is in good repair but cannot
1-22 be crossed by vehicles or pedestrians because of barriers and the
1-23 placement of "no trespassing" signs at the bridge since 1997
1-24 pursuant to orders issued by the governments of the United States of
1-25 America and the Republic of Mexico; and

1-26 WHEREAS, The La Linda international crossing is the only
1-27 bridge structure in place and the only point of entry authorized by
1-28 public law between the United States ports of entry at Presidio and
1-29 Del Rio, a distance of 385 miles; and

1-30 WHEREAS, The principal owner of the United States section of
1-31 the international bridge at La Linda, the National Parks
1-32 Conservation Association, is prepared to donate its interest in the
1-33 bridge and associated properties to the State of Texas through the
1-34 General Land Office so that the bridge may be reopened and operated
1-35 as a legal border crossing; and

1-36 WHEREAS, The tourism industries serving scenic and
1-37 recreational areas joined by this bridge, including the Big Bend
1-38 mountains of Texas and the Sierra del Carmen mountains of Northwest
1-39 Coahuila, wish to promote, accommodate, and economically benefit
1-40 from cross border tourism but are unable to implement those
1-41 objectives if the La Linda crossing is not functioning; and

1-42 WHEREAS, The safety of tourists wishing to enjoy the area,
1-43 the binational scientific cooperation called for under existing
1-44 international agreements, and the security and public safety of
1-45 communities and citizens on both sides of the international border
1-46 would be enhanced by a functioning border crossing at La Linda; and

1-47 WHEREAS, The State of Coahuila and the commissioners court of
1-48 Brewster County, respectively represented by the Instituto de
1-49 Turismo and the Big Bend Border Council and joined by a coalition of
1-50 local residents and the Big Bend National Park Superintendent, have
1-51 twice requested that the Binational Bridges and Border Crossings
1-52 working group, which is convened semiannually by the United States
1-53 Department of State and the Mexican Secretaria de Relaciones
1-54 Exteriores, take the necessary actions to have the bridge and
1-55 border crossing at La Linda reopened by the United States and
1-56 Mexican federal governments; and

1-57 WHEREAS, The working group, composed of United States and
1-58 Mexican federal authorities responsible for authorizing
1-59 international ports of entry and required inspections along the
1-60 international boundary, will convene again in the coming months to
1-61 consider action on either reopening the bridge at La Linda or
1-62 ordering its removal; and

1-63 WHEREAS, It is in the economic, cultural, and security
1-64 interest of the State of Texas and the homeland security interest of

2-1 the United States of America to have a functioning border crossing
2-2 station under the management and control of trained and equipped
2-3 law enforcement and public safety officials in the extensive area
2-4 known as the Big Bend; now, therefore, be it

2-5 RESOLVED, That the 78th Legislature of the State of Texas
2-6 hereby express its support and encouragement for the reopening of
2-7 the bridge and border crossing at La Linda to accommodate trade and
2-8 tourism between Texas and Coahuila, Mexico, and to better protect
2-9 residents of both countries and secure the protection of our nation
2-10 from threats that might be associated with the illegal crossing of
2-11 individuals or materials with a lethal intent; and, be it further

2-12 RESOLVED, That the legislature hereby urge the General Land
2-13 Office to proceed expeditiously with the due diligence needed to
2-14 make a determination regarding acceptance of an ownership interest
2-15 in La Linda Bridge by the State of Texas; and, be it further

2-16 RESOLVED, That the legislature hereby urge that the governor,
2-17 the Texas Department of Transportation, the secretary of state, the
2-18 Department of Public Safety of the State of Texas, the Parks and
2-19 Wildlife Department, the Texas Department of Economic Development,
2-20 the Texas Historical Commission, and other appropriate state
2-21 agencies render encouragement and assistance to the General Land
2-22 Office as it proceeds in this matter and render encouragement and
2-23 assistance as well to Brewster County and to private and public
2-24 advocates for tourism in the Big Bend in their efforts to develop a
2-25 regional tourism economy in conjunction with a reopened bridge at
2-26 La Linda; and, be it further

2-27 RESOLVED, That the legislature hereby call upon the United
2-28 States Department of State to communicate the interest of the State
2-29 of Texas in this matter to the government of the Republic of Mexico
2-30 and to all other parties participating in decisions relating to
2-31 either reopening or removing the bridge at La Linda; and, be it
2-32 further

2-33 RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward an
2-34 official copy of this resolution to the United States secretary of
2-35 state.

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