

By: Olivo

H.R. No. 178

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Texas's number one trading partner is Mexico; the
2 Texas economy; the Texas economy outperformed the national economy
3 during the 1990s due mainly in part to the state's exports to
4 Mexico; 44 percent of Texas' total exports are made to Mexico and
5 approximately one out of every 10 manufacturing jobs in Texas is
6 tied to trade with Mexico; and

7 WHEREAS, border communities in Texas rely heavily on tourism
8 and commerce and the free flow of legal cross-border traffic to help
9 their economies and the state economy; and

10 WHEREAS, estimates in 2002 by the Bank of Mexico figured that
11 Mexican visitors to the U.S.-Mexico border region accounted for
12 \$3.6 billion in annual sales in the United States; and

13 WHEREAS, nearly 80 percent of all United States trade with
14 Mexico, approximately \$230 billion in goods, travels over Texas
15 highways; trade between the two countries has grown from \$81.5
16 billion in 1993 to \$232 billion in 2002; and

17 WHEREAS, nearly 80 percent of all NAFTA related traffic
18 between the United States and Mexico enters through Texas ports of
19 entry; since 1993 two-way commerce between Texas and Mexico has
20 increased from \$100 billion and \$235 billion; Texas has exported to
21 Mexico more than \$272 billion in exports in the last seven years,
22 and in 2002 those exports accounted for six percent of the gross
23 state product and have added \$19.8 billion in earnings and 745,500
24 jobs to the Texas economy; and

1 WHEREAS The Minuteman Project is a group of volunteer
2 civilians who have set up a patrol to monitor a portion of the
3 United States border with Mexico for illegal immigration; during
4 April 2005, a few hundred volunteers conducted 24-hour patrols of a
5 portion of the Arizona border; and

6 WHEREAS, Minuteman patrols could impede the traffic and
7 negatively affect both tourism and trade along the border and
8 adversely affect international goodwill between Texas and Mexico;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, The Minuteman Project plans to begin patrols along
11 the Rio Grande in South Texas starting in October 2005, despite the
12 expressed reservations of both United States and Texas government
13 officials and agencies and various representatives from Texas
14 border communities; and

15 WHEREAS, While the Arizona patrols took place along a stretch
16 of the border that consists of open, mostly uninhabited desert
17 land, much of the area along the South Texas border is privately
18 owned and some of it is urbanized; an earlier effort to stop illegal
19 immigration on private South Texas ranches in 2003 led to an assault
20 charge against the landowner's representative and a civil lawsuit
21 and settlement; and

22 WHEREAS, United States Border Patrol officials said their job
23 was complicated when some of the Minutemen patrol members actions
24 set off motion detectors in Arizona that had been installed to
25 detect illegal immigration; members of law enforcement have said
26 that their jobs, already dangerous because of illegal immigration
27 and drug trafficking, are made more difficult and dangerous by

1 civilian patrols; and

2 WHEREAS, The presence of Minuteman Project chapters in 18
3 states, including states far from Mexico such as Maine, Minnesota,
4 Tennessee, and Utah, are viewed by many Hispanic Americans as
5 evidence that the group's intent is to polarize Hispanic
6 communities and stereotype all Hispanics as illegal; and

7 WHEREAS, Efforts to establish a Texas chapter of the
8 Minuteman Project were highlighted by the recent resignation of the
9 Texas project leader, who cited members' racism and hatred as
10 reasons for his resignation; national project leaders responded
11 that the resignation would not have any effect on planned actions in
12 Texas this October; and

13 WHEREAS, President George W. Bush has stated his opposition
14 to the Minuteman civilian patrols, saying, "I'm against vigilantes
15 in the United States of America, I'm for enforcing the law in a
16 rational way"; U.S. Department of Homeland Security Secretary
17 Michael Chertoff said, "The enforcement of the law is a job for
18 professionals"; Commissioner Robert C. Bonner of the United States
19 Customs and Border Protection agency stated that the United States
20 Border Patrol is best qualified and trained to handle border
21 control issues and that civilian patrols could cause not only
22 illegal migrants but also American citizens to be harmed; now,
23 therefore, be it

24 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 79th Texas
25 Legislature, 2nd Called Session, hereby urge Governor Rick Perry to
26 oppose the plans of the Minuteman Project to come to Texas and to
27 ask Minuteman Project representatives not to begin patrols of the

1 Texas border with Mexico; and, be it further

2 RESOLVED, That the chief clerk of the Texas House of
3 Representatives forward an official copy of this resolution to the
4 governor of the State of Texas.