

By: Gonzales

H.R. No. 464

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The unwavering courage and abundant optimism of
2 19-year-old Victor Alvarez of McAllen truly inspires all who have
3 the privilege of knowing him; and

4 WHEREAS, Born October 21, 1986, with spinal muscular atrophy,
5 a genetic disease that prevents the growth of muscle tissue and
6 confines one to a wheelchair, this remarkable young man has become a
7 role model of perseverance; as a child, he spent a year in intensive
8 care at The University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, and
9 although it was a frightening and difficult time, he drew strength
10 watching the scenes of life outside his window; eventually he was
11 sent to Comfort House, a hospice facility in McAllen, where four
12 months later, he celebrated his 10th birthday at a party thrown by
13 staff and volunteers; and

14 WHEREAS, Victor Alvarez continued to thrive at his new home,
15 where his beaming smile and delightful personality won him many
16 friends; just before his 12th birthday, he underwent innovative
17 back surgery to allow his body to better cope with growth spurts,
18 and shortly thereafter, he was able to enter the fifth grade; and

19 WHEREAS, An excellent student from the start, Mr. Alvarez was
20 named "Student of the Year" in sixth grade and then allowed to skip
21 the seventh grade; today, he takes advanced placement courses as a
22 senior at McAllen High School and consistently makes good grades;
23 and

24 WHEREAS, Mr. Alvarez has also cultivated numerous talents;

1 mentored by a local artist for several years, he has a growing
2 collection of paintings and illustrations, and plans to pursue a
3 career in graphic design; he is a prolific poet, and his essays are
4 occasionally published in *The Monitor*, the daily newspaper of
5 McAllen; the summer before his junior year, Mr. Alvarez attended
6 the Lorenzo de Zavala Youth Legislative Session at Southwestern
7 University, where among 226 youth, he was elected governor; and

8 WHEREAS, More than six years after Victor Alvarez arrived at
9 Comfort House, four friends enthusiastically volunteered to become
10 responsible for his care and he moved with them into the home of his
11 art mentor; several area organizations have also helped, including
12 a local Elks Lodge and Rotary Club as well as the Rio Grande chapter
13 of the Harley Owners Group; in recent years, he has participated in
14 the annual American Cancer Society Upper Valley Relay For Life,
15 helping to raise funds for cancer research, a cause close to his
16 heart as many of his fellow residents at Comfort House were cancer
17 patients; and

18 WHEREAS, Intimately attuned to the fragility of life, Victor
19 Alvarez lives with extraordinary verve, enthusiasm, and
20 compassion, uplifting and impressing everyone he meets; now,
21 therefore, be it

22 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 79th Texas
23 Legislature, 3rd Called Session, hereby honor Victor Alvarez for
24 his many noteworthy accomplishments and extend to him sincere best
25 wishes for success and much happiness in the future; and, be it
26 further

27 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be

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1 prepared for Mr. Alvarez as an expression of high regard by the
2 Texas House of Representatives.