

By: Chavez

H.R. No. 810

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The El Paso Sun Bowl Association, which oversees the
2 second-oldest, continuous bowl game in the country, has long played
3 a vital role in the life of El Paso and the surrounding region; and

4 WHEREAS, Created by the El Paso Kiwanis Club in 1934 as a
5 fund-raiser to benefit underprivileged children and to finance
6 improvements to the El Paso High School Stadium, the first Sun Bowl
7 was played on New Year's Day, 1935; it pitted a team of El Paso High
8 School all-stars against the high school squad from Ranger and
9 ended with a 25-21 El Paso victory; and

10 WHEREAS, Area civic leaders subsequently decided to make the
11 Sun Bowl a collegiate competition; the Sun Bowl Association was
12 founded in 1935 with a threefold purpose: to present a football
13 attraction of national importance, to promote El Paso and the
14 Southwest, and to generate tourist income for the area; and

15 WHEREAS, During the early years of the Sun Bowl, it was a
16 tradition to match the Border Conference champion against the best
17 available opponent; in 1936, the first collegiate Sun Bowl took
18 place between New Mexico State and Hardin-Simmons and ended in a
19 14-14 tie; and

20 WHEREAS, Today, the Sun Bowl matches teams from the PAC 10 and
21 Big 10 Conferences; on December 31, 2004, Arizona State bested
22 Purdue 27-23 in the 71st game in this historic series; and

23 WHEREAS, Over the decades, the Sun Bowl has seen many
24 memorable moments and milestones; in 1943, all profits from the

1 game were donated to World War II charities; the highest-scoring
2 Sun Bowl to date occurred in 1955, when The University of Texas at
3 El Paso won 47-20 against Florida State, a school whose team
4 included future actor Burt Reynolds; and

5 WHEREAS, In the first game to be played in the present Sun
6 Bowl Stadium, the 1963 Oregon team beat SMU 21-14; the contest the
7 following year, between Georgia and Texas Tech, marked a watershed,
8 as it was the first Sun Bowl to be televised; CBS began broadcasting
9 the game in 1968 and has carried the Sun Bowl ever since; and

10 WHEREAS, The first sold-out Sun Bowl in the present stadium
11 took place in 1967, when UTEP met Mississippi and scored a 14-7
12 victory; in response to the bowl's growing popularity, association
13 officials decided to expand the 30,000-seat facility to 51,000
14 seats, and construction was completed in time for the 1982 bowl game
15 between Texas and North Carolina; and

16 WHEREAS, In 1986, John Hancock Financial Services entered
17 into a multiyear contract with the Sun Bowl Association, making the
18 Sun Bowl the first post-season classic to be commercially
19 sponsored; subsequent sponsors have included Norwest Bank, Wells
20 Fargo Bank, and Vitalis; and

21 WHEREAS, Through the years, fans attending this venerable
22 showdown have had an opportunity to see some of the most talented
23 players in the nation; both Tony Dorsett and Barry Sanders went on
24 to win the Heisman Trophy the year after they appeared in the Sun
25 Bowl; those who competed in the bowl and were later inducted into
26 the NFL Hall of Fame include players Tony Dorsett, Sid Gillman, Don
27 Maynard, and Merlin Olsen and coaches Sammy Baugh and Bill Walsh;

1 and

2 WHEREAS, Other prominent Sun Bowl alumni include Ara
3 Parseghian, Billy Stevens, Charlie Johnson, and Jesse Whittenton;
4 among the stars to participate in the game in recent years have been
5 the 2000 John Mackey Award winner, Tim Stratton, the 2000 and 2001
6 Ray Guy Award winners, Kevin Stemke and Travis Dorsch, the 2000 Jim
7 Thorpe Award winner, Jamar Fletcher, and the 2000 Doak Walker Award
8 winner, LaDainian Tomlinson; and

9 WHEREAS, Since its inception, the Sun Bowl has drawn
10 approximately 2 million spectators through its gates, and the
11 direct economic impact from the game on the El Paso area is
12 currently estimated at \$12 to \$15 million; and

13 WHEREAS, In addition to producing a stellar football contest
14 year after year, Bernie Olivas, the executive director of the Sun
15 Bowl Association, and his fine staff routinely organize a number of
16 other popular community events; their 2004 schedule also featured
17 the 68th annual Las Palmas Del Sol Sun Bowl Parade; the 44th annual
18 State Farm Sun Bowl Basketball Tournament; the State Farm Bank
19 International Soccer Tournament; the Western Refining College
20 All-America Golf Classic, whose former winners include Tiger Woods,
21 David Duval, and Jerry Pate; and the Sun Bowl Fan Fiesta, which
22 provided the largest fireworks display in the city; and

23 WHEREAS, The El Paso Sun Bowl Association can take
24 justifiable pride in the many ways that its work benefits El Paso
25 and the surrounding region, in its longstanding success in bringing
26 to national attention one of the state's most colorful cities, and
27 in the continued unfolding of the rich history that surrounds this

1 illustrious gridiron competition; now, therefore, be it

2 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 79th Texas
3 Legislature hereby honor the El Paso Sun Bowl Association for its
4 exceptional contributions to the sport of football, to the city of
5 El Paso, and to the Lone Star State; and, be it further

6 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
7 prepared for the El Paso Sun Bowl Association as an expression of
8 high regard by the Texas House of Representatives.