

By: Gonzalez Toureilles

H.R. No. 1843

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Felix Longoria, a soldier from Three Rivers, gave
2 his life during World War II while fighting for the liberties of all
3 Americans, and in his death, this Texas hero became a galvanizing
4 force for the Mexican American civil rights movement; and

5 WHEREAS, Private Longoria grew up in a segregated society,
6 one in which those of Mexican descent faced numerous restrictions
7 as second-class citizens; he knew equality as an American for only a
8 brief time in his life, during his service in the United States
9 Army; and

10 WHEREAS, Drafted on November 11, 1944, Private Longoria was
11 25 when he entered the military, leaving behind a wife and a
12 four-year-old daughter; he died on June 15, 1945, killed by a
13 Japanese sniper while serving on a voluntary scouting patrol in the
14 Cagayan Valley, Luzon, Philippines; and

15 WHEREAS, When Private Longoria's remains were returned to the
16 States, his widow, Beatriz Longoria, and her sister contacted Dr.
17 Hector Garcia, a Corpus Christi physician; the previous year, Dr.
18 Garcia had organized the American G.I. Forum to help Latino
19 veterans secure the benefits and medical treatment owed them by
20 law; and

21 WHEREAS, Dr. Garcia sent a request via telegram to 17
22 government officials; he also called a meeting of the Corpus
23 Christi chapter of the forum to discuss a course of action; during
24 the meeting, which drew an attendance of more than 1,000 people, a

1 telegram arrived from the state's junior senator, Lyndon B.
2 Johnson, saying that he had arranged for Private Longoria to be
3 buried in Arlington National Cemetery; and

4 WHEREAS, Private Longoria was buried at Arlington on February
5 16, 1949; joining his family at the ceremony were Senator Johnson
6 and Lady Bird Johnson, Congressman John Lyle, and General Harry H.
7 Vaughan, a military aide to President Harry Truman; and

8 WHEREAS, Through his pride in his country and his readiness
9 to go above and beyond his duty, Felix Longoria typified thousands
10 of Latino servicemen, and the shameful treatment initially accorded
11 him in death encouraged the American G.I. Forum to expand the scope
12 of its efforts and gave forceful impetus to the Mexican American
13 civil rights movement; now, therefore, be it

14 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 79th Texas
15 Legislature hereby pay special tribute to the memory of Private
16 Felix Longoria for his selfless devotion to his country and the
17 cause of liberty and honor.