

By: Madla

S.C.R. No. 13

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1           WHEREAS, Colonias are unincorporated communities along the  
2 border of the United States and Mexico where rapid population  
3 growth is putting great pressure on an already inadequate  
4 infrastructure and straining the border region past its economic  
5 limits and resources, the tragic effects of which have broad  
6 repercussions on the health of residents; and

7           WHEREAS, According to correspondence with the Senate  
8 Committee on Intergovernmental Relations, the Texas Water  
9 Development Board has identified more than 1,500 colonias with an  
10 estimated population of 400,000 residents, while other estimates  
11 place this population at approximately 700,000 residents; and

12           WHEREAS, While the struggle to provide affordable housing in  
13 these communities is ongoing, a new type of substandard development  
14 called "non-border colonias" is cropping up in areas far from the  
15 border region that is similarly lacking in safe, sanitary housing  
16 and basic human services; and

17           WHEREAS, A colonia is defined in Section 2306.581, Government  
18 Code, as "a geographic area located in a county some part of which  
19 is within 150 miles of the international border of this state and  
20 that has a majority population composed of individuals and families  
21 of low and very low income"; and

22           WHEREAS, Non-border colonias have yet to be officially  
23 defined and therefore receive little attention though they face  
24 many of the same challenges as border colonias, including an

1 absence of basic services such as potable water, adequate sewage  
2 systems, drainage, streets, and utilities; and

3 WHEREAS, Worthwhile programs such as the Contract for Deed  
4 Conversion Initiative, authorized by the 78th Texas Legislature and  
5 specifically designed to assist colonia residents who are currently  
6 purchasing residential property, apply only to residents within the  
7 border region specified in the statute; and

8 WHEREAS, With the number of non-border colonias rapidly  
9 increasing, an assessment of their prevalence and needs should be  
10 prepared to enable the state to act accordingly; now, therefore, be  
11 it

12 RESOLVED, That the 79th Legislature of the State of Texas  
13 hereby direct the Texas Department of Housing and Community  
14 Affairs' Office of Colonia Initiatives and the Office of Rural and  
15 Community Affairs to jointly conduct a study of the current status  
16 and needs of non-border colonias; and, be it further

17 RESOLVED, That the Texas Department of Housing and Community  
18 Affairs' Office of Colonia Initiatives and the Office of Rural and  
19 Community Affairs submit a full report of their findings and  
20 recommendations to the 80th Legislature when that legislature  
21 convenes in January 2007; and, be it further

22 RESOLVED, That the secretary of state forward an official  
23 copy of this resolution to the executive director of the Texas  
24 Department of Housing and Community Affairs and the executive  
25 director of the Office of Rural and Community Affairs.