

By: Hinojosa, et al.

S.R. No. 970

SENATE RESOLUTION

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

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

WHEREAS, Border communities in Texas rely heavily on tourism and commerce and the free flow of legal cross-border traffic to help support their economies; Minuteman patrols could impede the traffic and negatively affect both tourism and trade along the border; and

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

WHEREAS, During the Minuteman patrols in Arizona in April,

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United States Border patrol officials said their job was complicated when some of the patrol members set off motion detectors that had been installed to detect illegal immigration; members of law enforcement have said that their jobs, already dangerous because of illegal immigration and drug trafficking, are made more difficult and dangerous by civilian patrols; and

WHEREAS, President George W. Bush has stated his opposition to the Minuteman civilian patrols, saying "I'm against vigilantes in the United States of America, I'm for enforcing the law in a rational way"; Commissioner Robert C. Bonner of the United States Customs and Border Protection agency stated that the United States Border Patrol is best qualified and trained to handle border control issues and that civilian patrols could cause not only illegal migrants but also American citizens to be harmed; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 79th Legislature, hereby urge Governor Rick Perry to oppose the plans of the Minuteman Project to come to Texas and to ask Minuteman Project representatives not to begin patrols of the Texas border with Mexico; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the secretary of the senate forward a copy of this Resolution to the Governor of the State of Texas.