

By: Rodriguez

H.C.R. No. 64

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, The Texas portion of the border between the United
2 States and the United Mexican States comprises more than half of the
3 nearly 2,000-mile boundary between the two countries; as a result
4 of this proximity, the State of Texas is uniquely aware of the
5 importance of border protection to the security of the nation as a
6 whole and sensitive to the impact of illegal immigration on the
7 economic and social well-being of both countries; and

8 WHEREAS, In the aftermath of September 11, 2001, border
9 security and immigration have become fundamental issues in the
10 development of national security policy; one such measure, the
11 Secure Border Initiative, was unveiled by the Department of
12 Homeland Security on November 2, 2005, and seeks to secure the
13 United States' international borders by reducing illegal
14 immigration; and

15 WHEREAS, The Office of the Inspector General at the
16 Department of Homeland Security estimates the costs of detaining
17 illegal immigrants to be \$1.2 billion annually, and current
18 research indicates that detaining immigrant and asylum-seeking
19 families does not deter illegal immigration; even so, a central
20 component of the Secure Border Initiative is expanded detention
21 authority for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the largest
22 investigative branch of the department; and

23 WHEREAS, Under this authority, the Department of Homeland
24 Security recently opened the T. Don Hutto Residential Facility in

1 Taylor, Texas, for the exclusive purpose of detaining immigrant and
2 asylum-seeking families who are awaiting immigration or
3 deportation proceedings; and

4 WHEREAS, Of the 400 people detained in this privately owned
5 and operated, for-profit detention center, approximately 200 are
6 children; a typical day for a child detained at the Taylor facility
7 includes only four hours of education and one hour of outdoor
8 recreation; the meals served are reported to have caused digestive
9 problems for the children, including infants who are forced to
10 consume formula beyond the advised date due to a lack of alternative
11 nutrition; and

12 WHEREAS, The United States house and senate committees on
13 appropriations have each expressed concern about children of
14 families detained at the center, particularly about reports that
15 many have been removed from their families and placed in separate
16 facilities operated by the Office of Refugee Resettlement; and

17 WHEREAS, Children who have had no decisive role in their
18 migration or flight should not be exposed to avoidable trauma; it is
19 clearly within our means to provide these children and infants a
20 safe environment without disruption to their families, nutrition,
21 education, and exercise while their parents await immigration
22 proceedings; and

23 WHEREAS, A valid alternative to the current method of
24 detaining immigrant families would be to release and reunite these
25 children and their parents but closely monitor them under the
26 Intensive Supervision Appearance Program, thereby reducing the
27 emotional consequences to young children and the financial burden

1 to taxpayers; and

2 WHEREAS, Certainly the methods used to decrease illegal
3 immigration and secure our borders must be effective, but
4 considering the apparent consequences of family detention, every
5 possible alternative to family detention should be examined,
6 considered, and exhausted before such action is taken; now,
7 therefore, be it

8 RESOLVED, That the 80th Legislature of the State of Texas
9 hereby respectfully request the U.S. Department of Homeland
10 Security to reconsider all alternatives to the detention of
11 immigrant and asylum-seeking families with children; and, be it
12 further

13 RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward official
14 copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, the
15 speaker of the house of representatives and the president of the
16 senate of the United States Congress, all members of the Texas
17 delegation to the congress, and the secretary of the United States
18 Department of Homeland Security, with the request that this
19 resolution be officially entered in the Congressional Record as a
20 memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.