

1-1 By: Gallego (Senate Sponsor - Uresti) H.C.R. No. 164
1-2 (In the Senate - Received from the House May 10, 2007;
1-3 May 14, 2007, read first time and referred to Committee on
1-4 Transportation and Homeland Security; May 17, 2007, reported
1-5 favorably by the following vote: Yeas 8, Nays 0; May 17, 2007, sent
1-6 to printer.)

1-7 HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1-8 WHEREAS, In 1962, Pub. L. No. 87-525 authorized the
1-9 construction of an international bridge across the Rio Grande to
1-10 join Heath Canyon in Texas with the village of La Linda, Coahuila,
1-11 Mexico, for the purpose of transporting refined ore into the United
1-12 States from nearby mills in Mexico and to one day facilitate the
1-13 movement of tourists interested in visiting the Sierra del Carmen
1-14 mountain areas across from Big Bend National Park; and

1-15 WHEREAS, Since the bridge was constructed, the Texas
1-16 Department of Transportation has, without interruption, maintained
1-17 Farm-to-Market Road 2627 as a paved two-lane highway for a 28-mile
1-18 stretch connecting the bridge to United States Highway 385, which
1-19 leads from that junction southward to Big Bend National Park and
1-20 northward 40 miles to Marathon and United States Highway 90; and

1-21 WHEREAS, La Linda Bridge, also known as the Hallie Stillwell
1-22 Memorial Bridge, is still in place and is in good repair but cannot
1-23 be crossed by vehicles or pedestrians because of barriers and the
1-24 placement of "no trespassing" signs at the bridge since 1997
1-25 pursuant to orders issued by the governments of the United States of
1-26 America and the United Mexican States; and

1-27 WHEREAS, The La Linda international crossing is the only
1-28 bridge structure in place and the only point of entry authorized by
1-29 public law between the United States ports of entry at Presidio and
1-30 Del Rio, a distance of 385 miles; and

1-31 WHEREAS, The owners of the United States section of the
1-32 international bridge at La Linda wish the bridge to be reopened and
1-33 operated as a legal border crossing; and

1-34 WHEREAS, Local residents, wildlife and conservation groups,
1-35 outfitters, guides, and hospitality providers who recognize the
1-36 unique attractions of the Big Bend-Maderas del Carmen mountain
1-37 desert corridor wish to see the planned growth of a
1-38 conservation-minded tourism economy but are unable to proceed if
1-39 the La Linda crossing is not functioning; and

1-40 WHEREAS, The safety of tourists wishing to enjoy the area,
1-41 the binational scientific cooperation called for under existing
1-42 international agreements, and the security and public safety of
1-43 communities and citizens on both sides of the international border
1-44 would be enhanced by a functioning border crossing at La Linda; and

1-45 WHEREAS, Over the past six years the State of Coahuila and the
1-46 Commissioners Court of Brewster County, represented by the Big Bend
1-47 Border Council and joined by a coalition of local residents and the
1-48 Big Bend National Park Superintendent, have repeatedly requested
1-49 that the United States Department of State and the Mexican
1-50 Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores take the necessary actions to
1-51 have the bridge and border crossing at La Linda reopened by the
1-52 United States and Mexican federal governments; and

1-53 WHEREAS, The Binational Bridges and Border Crossings working
1-54 group, composed of United States and Mexican federal authorities
1-55 responsible for authorizing international ports of entry and
1-56 required inspections along the international boundary, is convened
1-57 semiannually by the United States Department of State and the
1-58 Mexican Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores and will meet in the
1-59 coming months to consider action on either reopening the bridge at
1-60 La Linda or ordering its removal; and

1-61 WHEREAS, In furtherance of meeting preconditions for
1-62 reopening the bridge set forth by the United States Department of
1-63 State, an agreement on consolidation of ownership into a single
1-64 entity with the capacity to maintain and operate an international

2-1 bridge has been reached between the owners of the United States
2-2 section of the bridge; and

2-3 WHEREAS, It is in the economic, cultural, and security
2-4 interests of the State of Texas and the homeland security interest
2-5 of the United States of America to have a functioning
2-6 border-crossing station under the management and control of trained
2-7 and equipped law enforcement and public safety officials in the
2-8 extensive area known as the Big Bend; now, therefore, be it

2-9 RESOLVED, That the 80th Legislature of the State of Texas
2-10 hereby express its support and encouragement for the reopening of
2-11 the bridge and border crossing at La Linda to accommodate trade and
2-12 tourism between Texas and Coahuila, Mexico, and to better protect
2-13 residents of both countries and secure the protection of our nation
2-14 from threats that might be associated with the illegal crossing of
2-15 individuals or materials with a lethal intent; and, be it further

2-16 RESOLVED, That the legislature hereby urge the governor and
2-17 the Texas Economic Development and Tourism Office, the Texas
2-18 Department of Transportation, the Parks and Wildlife Department,
2-19 the secretary of state, the Department of Public Safety, the
2-20 General Land Office, the Texas Historical Commission, and other
2-21 appropriate state agencies to render encouragement and assistance
2-22 to Brewster County and the owners of the La Linda bridge in their
2-23 efforts to reopen the bridge and to assume a role as a stakeholder
2-24 in planning cooperative conservation and tourism initiatives
2-25 across the Big Bend-Maderas del Carmen area; and, be it further

2-26 RESOLVED, That the legislature hereby urge representatives
2-27 of the Parks and Wildlife Department and the Texas Department of
2-28 Transportation to meet at the earliest possible time with
2-29 representatives of the owners of the United States section of the La
2-30 Linda bridge, of Brewster County, and of Big Bend National Park to
2-31 review the status of the bridge and, as they may deem appropriate,
2-32 recommend formation of an ad hoc liaison committee to offer advice
2-33 and facilitation to Brewster County and the owners of the La Linda
2-34 bridge on the future of the bridge and plans for cross-border
2-35 tourism and conservation; and, be it further

2-36 RESOLVED, That the legislature hereby call upon the United
2-37 States Department of State to communicate the interest of the State
2-38 of Texas in this matter to the government of the United Mexican
2-39 States and to all other parties participating in decisions relating
2-40 to either reopening or removing the bridge at La Linda; and, be it
2-41 further

2-42 RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward official
2-43 copies of this resolution to all the members of the Texas delegation
2-44 to the United States Congress and to the United States secretary of
2-45 state and the Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores, United Mexican
2-46 States.

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