

By: Quintanilla

H.R. No. 535

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, Rogelio Sanchez, the longest-serving county  
2 commissioner in the history of El Paso County, passed away on  
3 November 28, 2006, leaving behind a loving family, many friends and  
4 admirers, and a community grateful for his years of dedicated  
5 service; and

6           WHEREAS, Born on June 14, 1921, in the Mexican state of  
7 Coahuila, Rogelio Sanchez moved with his family to Fort Hancock in  
8 1923, where he grew up in a humble but close-knit community centered  
9 around home, school, and church; at a young age, he took jobs in the  
10 area's cotton fields, often laboring from sunrise to sunset for a  
11 daily wage of 50 cents; he also worked hard in his school studies,  
12 and his exemplary grades earned him the title of valedictorian of  
13 the 1939 graduating class at Fort Hancock High School; and

14           WHEREAS, At the age of 18, Mr. Sanchez enrolled at Sul Ross  
15 State Teachers College in Alpine; he was faced with racial  
16 discrimination for the first time in his life during college, and  
17 this unfair treatment made him more determined than ever to prove  
18 himself; after graduating from college in 1942, this courageous  
19 young man answered the call of his country during World War II,  
20 serving in the United States Army for 32 months and taking part in  
21 operations in the South Pacific; he attained the rank of sergeant  
22 before being honorably discharged in December 1945; and

23           WHEREAS, Mr. Sanchez returned to Texas and chose to serve his  
24 community as a schoolteacher, working in Fort Hancock, Tornillo,

1 and Clint; he took a significant interest in politics, and on  
2 December 12, 1959, the feast day of the Virgin of Guadalupe, he  
3 announced that he was running for a seat on the Commissioners Court  
4 of El Paso County; backed by a group of committed supporters, he  
5 conducted a spirited door-to-door campaign and won the election,  
6 beginning his 36-year tenure as a county commissioner; inspired by  
7 that successful first campaign, he continued to announce his  
8 candidacy for reelection on that same date of December 12 for the  
9 rest of his career; and

10 WHEREAS, During his years as a county commissioner, Mr.  
11 Sanchez supported the construction of many essential facilities,  
12 including the R. E. Thomason General Hospital, the El Paso County  
13 Library in Fabens, the Woodrow Bean Transmountain Road, the Sun  
14 Bowl Stadium at The University of Texas at El Paso, and the new El  
15 Paso County Courthouse; he worked to pave streets in new  
16 subdivisions and to build low-income housing, and he brought in  
17 state grant money to improve water service in the unincorporated  
18 colonia settlements in the county; and

19 WHEREAS, Commissioner Sanchez's accomplishments have been  
20 honored many times; he was named one of the most influential  
21 Hispanics in Texas by *Texas Hispanic Magazine* and described as one  
22 of the most significant Mexican American public figures in Texas by  
23 The University of Texas at Arlington; in addition, a number of  
24 public facilities have been named in his honor, including a Texas  
25 Department of Criminal Justice facility, an El Paso County public  
26 housing facility, and a complex in Fabens that contains a library  
27 and county offices; and

1           WHEREAS, A man who often said that the secret of public  
2 service was learning to disagree as agreeably as possible, Rogelio  
3 Sanchez forged strong and constructive relationships with his  
4 colleagues while carrying forth effective initiatives to benefit  
5 his constituents; through his many decades of service, he worked to  
6 bridge racial and political differences, and his steadfast efforts  
7 had a lasting and positive impact on El Paso County; now, therefore,  
8 be it

9           RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 80th Texas  
10 Legislature hereby honor the life of Rogelio Sanchez and offer  
11 sincere condolences to the members of his family: to his wife of 56  
12 years, Maria Montoya Sanchez; to his children, Michael Sanchez and  
13 his wife, Pat, Albert Sanchez, and Maricela Chibli and her husband,  
14 Eduardo; to his grandchildren, Aaron and Marissa Chibli; to his  
15 brothers, Jesus and his wife, Aurora, and Luis and his wife,  
16 Juanita; to his sisters, Josefina Sanchez, Dolores Rivas and her  
17 husband, Ignacio, and Irene Batista and her husband, Ruben; and to  
18 his other relatives and friends; Mr. Sanchez was preceded in death  
19 by his brother, David Sanchez, and by his sisters, Julia Anaya,  
20 Connie Chavez, and Maria Vasquez; and, be it further

21           RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
22 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of  
23 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Rogelio  
24 Sanchez.