

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 495
By: Hinojosa
Culture, Recreation & Tourism
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The achievements of Dr. Hector P. Garcia, a medical doctor, war veteran, civil rights leader, and presidential candidate had an undeniable impact on Texas, the nation, and the world. In a time of deep social unrest, Dr. Garcia confronted discrimination, as it affected Mexican American civil rights, through peaceful protest and legal recourse. Dr. Garcia saw the blatant deprivation of Mexican Americans' rights and fought for half a century working to reverse those injustices.

Dr. Garcia worked tirelessly for the rights of Hispanics and veterans who were being denied education, medical, and housing benefits, founding the civil rights organization known as the American GI Forum in 1948 to unify those efforts. Dr. Garcia, a World War II hero, earned a Bronze Star with six battle stars and, in 1984, was the first Mexican American to be awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Ronald Reagan, the highest honor given to a civilian by the president. Dr. Garcia's extensive service and accomplishments included some of the most memorable occasions in recent Texas history.

S.B. 495 designates the third Wednesday in September as Dr. Hector P. Garcia Day and authorizes that day to be regularly observed in schools and other places to ensure that his sacrifices, contributions, and legacy are preserved for future generations.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

S.B. 495 amends the Government Code to designate the third Wednesday of September as Dr. Hector P. Garcia Day and to authorize that day to be regularly observed by appropriate ceremonies and activities in the public schools and other places.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2009.