

By: Pena

H.C.R. No. 5

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, The Texas Legislative Medal of Honor was established
2 to honor gallant and intrepid service by a member of the state or
3 federal military forces, and through his courageous actions in
4 World War II, United States Army Private Pedro Cano distinguished
5 himself as a worthy recipient of this prestigious award; and

6 WHEREAS, Born to Nicholasa Gonzalez Cano and Secundino Cano
7 on July 7, 1920, in Nuevo Leon, Mexico, Pedro Cano moved with his
8 family to Texas as an infant and spent the rest of his life, except
9 for his time in the army, in the Rio Grande Valley; and

10 WHEREAS, After joining the armed forces during World War II,
11 Private Cano was deployed to Europe, where he fought with the 4th
12 Infantry Division; in December 1944, he was advancing with his
13 company near Schevenhutte, Germany, when they came under withering
14 fire from German machine guns; with his comrades pinned down,
15 Private Cano worked his way forward alone, through a hail of fire
16 and over more than 100 yards of heavily mined terrain, until he was
17 within 30 feet of the nearest German emplacement; firing one round
18 with his hand-held rocket launcher, he destroyed the position and
19 killed its two gunners and five supporting riflemen; he then moved
20 on toward a second emplacement, which he attacked with his rifle and
21 hand grenades, killing several more soldiers; and

22 WHEREAS, With another American company nearby similarly
23 immobilized, Private Cano crept to within 15 yards of a third
24 emplacement, killed its two gunners with a rocket, and then

1 destroyed yet another emplacement and killed its gunners, enabling
2 that company to also advance; and

3 WHEREAS, The next day, the Americans once more encountered
4 heavy German resistance, and Private Cano again moved forward alone
5 with his bazooka; crossing open, fire-swept ground, he succeeded in
6 suppressing three more machine-gun positions and killing their
7 gunners, bringing to nearly 30 the number of German soldiers he
8 killed during that two-day period; and

9 WHEREAS, Sometime later, while on patrol, Private Cano and
10 his platoon were surprised by German soldiers, who inflicted heavy
11 casualties; Private Cano lay motionless on the ground until the
12 assailants closed in, then tossed a grenade into their midst,
13 wounding or killing all of them; and

14 WHEREAS, It was in this engagement, or shortly afterward,
15 that Pedro Cano sustained injuries that left him permanently
16 disabled; in addition to a Purple Heart, he was awarded two Silver
17 Stars and a Distinguished Service Cross, the nation's
18 second-highest award for valor; of the more than 16,100,000
19 individuals who served in the U.S. armed forces during World War II,
20 only 5,059 were recognized with the DSC; and

21 WHEREAS, Mr. Cano's most illustrious medal arrived at his
22 home near Edinburg in the mail, prompting area citizens to plan a
23 formal ceremony, complete with numerous other festivities; on April
24 26, 1946, Pedro Cano Day, some 4,000 local residents turned out to
25 witness General Jonathan M. Wainwright present the medal to the
26 former private; also present on the dais were other high-ranking
27 American and Mexican military officers, as well as civil officials

1 and several other Rio Grande Valley military heroes; in his
2 remarks, General Wainwright declared that he believed Pedro Cano
3 actually deserved the highest recognition of all, the Medal of
4 Honor; and

5 WHEREAS, In May 1946, Mr. Cano realized a longtime aspiration
6 when he received his American citizenship; six years later, on June
7 24, 1952, he was killed in a traffic accident; survived by his wife,
8 Herminia Garza Cano, his daughters, Dominga and Maria, and his son,
9 Susano, Pedro Cano was buried with military honors in Edinburg,
10 where today a street and an elementary school both bear his name;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, Pedro Cano repeatedly risked his life to save the
13 lives of his fellow soldiers and to help advance their mission, and
14 for his extraordinary heroism he is most assuredly deserving of
15 this state's supreme military award; now, therefore, be it

16 RESOLVED, That the 81st Legislature of the State of Texas
17 hereby posthumously confer the Texas Legislative Medal of Honor on
18 Pedro Cano in recognition of his courageous actions in World War II
19 and express to his family its deepest appreciation on behalf of all
20 his fellow Texans; and, be it further

21 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
22 prepared for Mr. Cano's family as an expression of highest regard by
23 the Texas House of Representatives and Senate.