

By: Gonzales

H.R. No. 228

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Citizens of Hidalgo County are gathering at the
2 State Capitol to celebrate Hidalgo County Day on February 10, 2009;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, Rich in history, Hidalgo County's mix of urban and
5 rural landscapes is home to more than 750,000 people, six
6 international bridges, and a thriving economy anchored by the
7 health care, retail, trade, and tourism industries; and

8 WHEREAS, This gateway to the United States was first settled
9 by the Coahuilteicans, the Karankawa, the Lipan Apaches, and the
10 Comanche; the earliest Spanish visitors, including Jose de
11 Escandon, arrived in the 17th century and established settlements
12 along the Rio Grande; the Spanish government issued land grants
13 leading to the creation of many cattle ranches, which remain an
14 integral part of life in the county today; and

15 WHEREAS, After the end of the Mexican-American War in 1848,
16 the region became part of the United States and a popular way
17 station for prospectors traveling to the California Gold Rush;
18 established in 1852, Hidalgo County was named for Miguel Hidalgo y
19 Costilla, an advocate for Mexican independence; in the early 20th
20 century, the town of Chapin was renamed Edinburg and made county
21 seat; and

22 WHEREAS, The arrival of the railway in 1904 helped introduce
23 large-scale farming in the county, particularly of citrus, cotton,
24 corn, and sugarcane; with the establishment in 1924 of a regional

1 Texas Agricultural Experiment Station in Weslaco, the towns along
2 Highway 83 began to thrive and came to be described as "the longest
3 main street in the world"; and

4 WHEREAS, While farming and ranching remain important to the
5 county, the discovery of oil in 1934 increased the region's
6 prosperity; today the county is one of the fastest growing and most
7 vibrant regions of Texas, home to many talented individuals
8 dedicated to transforming it into a top place to live, work, and
9 play; the county is considered a major port of entry into the United
10 States, and the shipment of goods from Mexico is an essential part
11 of the county's economy; and

12 WHEREAS, This prosperity is a product of the hard work of its
13 citizens, who are well served by The University of Texas-Pan
14 American in Edinburg and South Texas College in McAllen; the county
15 also pays tribute to its own heritage and learns about the heritage
16 of others through such fine cultural institutions and venues as the
17 Museum for South Texas History, the International Museum of Art and
18 Science, the Valley Symphony Orchestra and Chorale, and the
19 up-and-coming art and entertainment district in the city of
20 McAllen; and

21 WHEREAS, Residents and visitors alike enjoy the many
22 attractions of Hidalgo County; the Texas Citrus Fiesta in Mission
23 every winter features a carnival and the Parade of Oranges; in
24 Weslaco the Rio Grande Valley Onion Festival in April includes food
25 booths, entertainment, and onion recipe contests; the Rio Grande
26 Valley Livestock Show in Mercedes draws an average attendance of
27 160,000 every March, and shoppers flock to the Mercado Delta, an

1 outdoor/indoor artisan market in Edcouch which opened in 2008, as
2 well as to other retail venues across the county; and

3 WHEREAS, Visitors from around the world make pilgrimages to
4 the Basilica of Our Lady of San Juan del Valle-National Shrine; with
5 nearly 400 species of birds, the Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge
6 near Alamo is an international destination for birders; and

7 WHEREAS, Led by County Judge J. D. Salinas and County
8 Commissioners Sylvia S. Handy, Hector "Tito" Palacios, Joe M.
9 Flores, and Oscar L. Garza, Jr., the residents of this dynamic
10 region of the Lone Star State have much to be proud of, as they
11 celebrate the past and work to build a bright and prosperous future;
12 now, therefore, be it

13 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 81st Texas
14 Legislature hereby recognize February 10, 2009, as Hidalgo County
15 Day at the State Capitol and extend to the visiting delegation
16 sincere best wishes for an informative and enjoyable visit to
17 Austin.