

By: Martinez Fischer

H.R. No. 407

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The documentary film *A Class Apart* will make its
2 broadcast premiere on February 23, 2009, on the acclaimed PBS
3 series *An American Experience*; and

4 WHEREAS, Produced and directed by noted filmmakers Carlos
5 Sandoval and Peter Miller, *A Class Apart* explores the struggles of
6 Latinos in the United States through the fascinating story of a
7 landmark yet little-known civil rights case; the U.S. Supreme
8 Court's ruling in *Hernandez v. Texas* was overshadowed by the highly
9 publicized *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling two weeks later, but
10 *Hernandez* marked the first time a Mexican American attorney
11 appeared before the supreme court, and the ruling extended the
12 protections of the Fourteenth Amendment to Latinos; and

13 WHEREAS, The documentary offers high drama, beginning with a
14 murder in Edna, Texas, and following the valiant efforts of Gustavo
15 "Gus" Garcia, Chris Alderete, James de Anda, Carlos Cadena, and
16 John J. Herrera, the Mexican American legal team, to find justice
17 before the supreme court; it also examines the discrimination and
18 bigotry confronting Hispanics in the post-World War II era and
19 highlights the grassroots movement that sprang up to support the
20 lawyers in the *Hernandez* case; and

21 WHEREAS, Reaching out beyond the television audience, the
22 filmmakers have coordinated with the Active Voice organization on a
23 long-range initiative to help create a community dialogue about
24 Latino heritage and civil rights issues; the *Class Apart* Project in

1 Texas is using house parties and community screenings to foster
2 intergenerational discussion; classroom curriculum materials are
3 being developed with the help of legal scholars, educators, and
4 experts in Latino history and culture; and

5 WHEREAS, *A Class Apart* illuminates an important juncture in
6 American history and broadens our understanding of the Latino
7 experience; moreover, the associated activities planned in
8 conjunction with national and local groups will continue to enhance
9 appreciation for the contributions of Latinos and help build a
10 foundation for future leadership in civil rights and social
11 justice; now, therefore, be it

12 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 81st Texas
13 Legislature congratulate Carlos Sandoval and Peter Miller on the
14 broadcast premiere of *A Class Apart* and extend warm wishes for
15 continued success to all those associated with the film; and, be it
16 further

17 RESOLVED, That official copies of this resolution be prepared
18 for Mr. Sandoval and Mr. Miller as an expression of high regard by
19 the Texas House of Representatives.