

By: Chavez

H.R. No. 448

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Proud residents of El Paso are gathering at the
2 State Capitol on February 17, 2009, to celebrate El Paso Day, and
3 the event provides a perfect occasion to recognize the dynamism of
4 this great Texas city; and

5 WHEREAS, Anchoring the far west corner of the state, where
6 the United States and Mexico come together, El Paso boasts a
7 colorful history informed by the mingling of many cultures and
8 customs, each of which has contributed greatly to the city's status
9 as a thriving international metropolis; and

10 WHEREAS, Native Americans dwelt for centuries in this harsh
11 desert beside the Rio Grande; in 1581, members of the
12 Rodriguez-Sanchez expedition named a pass between two mountain
13 ranges El Paso del Norte, and the first permanent Spanish colony was
14 founded near present-day San Elizario by Juan de Onate in 1598; and

15 WHEREAS, For the next two centuries, El Paso remained part of
16 the Spanish empire, and then, after 1821, part of Mexico; the
17 complex community of Europeans, mestizos, and Indians along the Rio
18 Grande became an important junction on the Camino Real; and

19 WHEREAS, After the end of the Mexican-American War in 1848,
20 El Paso became a part of the United States, leading to the growth of
21 Anglo settlements along the north bank of the Rio Grande and laying
22 the foundations for the multicultural character of the city; and

23 WHEREAS, El Paso welcomed the arrival of the railroad in
24 1881, and within a decade, a dusty village of some 700 inhabitants

1 was transformed into a western boomtown of more than 10,000; during
2 this tumultuous era, El Paso was known as the "Six Shooter Capital,"
3 a place teeming with cattlemen, gamblers, and gunfighters,
4 including such famous figures as lawman Pat Garrett and outlaw John
5 Wesley Hardin; and

6 WHEREAS, By the early 20th century, reform-minded citizens
7 had curbed much of El Paso's wildness; over 77,000 individuals
8 called El Paso home by 1925, and the metropolitan area now has about
9 700,000 residents; its proximity to Ciudad Juarez, its sister city
10 across the Rio Grande, gives the two cities the distinction of being
11 one of the largest population centers on any international border
12 in the world; and

13 WHEREAS, For more than a century, the presence of Fort Bliss
14 has contributed to the city's proud military tradition and vibrant
15 economy; today, El Paso is the focal point of an annual \$50 billion
16 in trade between the United States and Mexico; long known as the
17 home of such famous brands as Tony Lama Boots, El Paso's diverse
18 economy includes agriculture, textiles, tourism, the manufacture
19 of cement and other building materials, and the refining of metals
20 and petroleum; and

21 WHEREAS, The 1966 Texas Western College basketball team,
22 featuring the first-ever all-black starting lineup in college
23 athletic history and led by the legendary Coach Don "The Bear"
24 Haskins, won the 1966 NCAA Men's Division I Basketball
25 Championship; their achievement helped to break down racial
26 barriers in sports and inspired the movie *Glory Road*; and

27 WHEREAS, The city provides myriad opportunities for higher

1 education through The University of Texas at El Paso, El Paso
2 Community College, and the El Paso campus of Howard Payne
3 University; further bolstering the city's appeal are such cultural
4 attractions as the El Paso Museum of Art, the El Paso Symphony
5 Orchestra, the El Paso Museum of History, and the Fort Bliss Museum,
6 as well as two professional sporting teams, the El Paso Diablos
7 baseball team and the El Paso Patriots soccer team; and

8 WHEREAS, This lively city has been the birthplace and home of
9 many remarkable Americans, including Supreme Court justice Sandra
10 Day O'Connor, *Star Trek* creator Gene Roddenberry, *Tonight Show*
11 producer Rudy Tellez, artist and muralist Tom Lea, actors Gilbert
12 Roland, Debbie Reynolds, Thomas Haden Church, and Academy Award
13 winner F. Murray Abraham, singers Phil Ochs, Bobby Fuller, and
14 Florencia Bisenta de Casillas Martinez Cardona, better known as
15 Vikki Carr, disc jockey Steve Crosno, and rock bands At the
16 Drive-In, Sparta, and Grammy Award winner The Mars Volta; and

17 WHEREAS, Ysleta del Sur Pueblo, settled by members of the
18 Tigua tribe, is considered the oldest community in Texas; its
19 tribal council is the oldest ongoing governmental entity in the
20 state and has been recognized by Spain, Mexico, and the United
21 States; the tribe has established itself as an important
22 contributor to the economy of El Paso, owning and operating tribal
23 businesses that benefit its members, its business partners, and
24 area citizens; and

25 WHEREAS, Living in a dramatic setting, where urban energy
26 meets the severe beauty of the desert, the citizens of El Paso may
27 take great pride in the knowledge that their community has

1 contributed immeasurably to the vitality of the Lone Star State;
2 now, therefore, be it

3 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 81st Texas
4 Legislature hereby recognize February 17, 2009, as El Paso Day at
5 the State Capitol and extend to the visiting delegation sincere
6 best wishes for an enjoyable and memorable visit to Austin.