

By: Ortiz, Jr.

H.R. No. 796

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Nearly 2-1/2 years have gone by since Freddy Fender
2 died on October 14, 2006, but the passage of time has in no way
3 diminished the stature of this Texas music legend, and his legacy
4 remains as poignant as ever; and

5 WHEREAS, Born Baldemar Huerta on June 4, 1937, in the South
6 Texas town of San Benito, he began singing at a young age and
7 originally focused on performing the conjunto, Tejano, and
8 traditional Mexican music that was popular in his Hispanic
9 neighborhood; after serving three years in the U.S. Marine Corps,
10 he launched his music career in the late 1950s by playing Texas
11 honky-tonks and recording Spanish versions of popular hits by other
12 performers; when Imperial Records offered him a contract in 1959,
13 he adopted the stage name Freddy Fender; and

14 WHEREAS, The following year, that name became well known all
15 across the country as Mr. Fender's song "Wasted Days and Wasted
16 Nights" became a national hit; sadly, his good fortune was
17 short-lived, as an arrest for possession of a small amount of
18 marijuana led to a three-year prison term in Louisiana; by the late
19 1960s, he had returned to the Rio Grande Valley, where he earned a
20 living as a mechanic, playing music only on the weekends; and

21 WHEREAS, Mr. Fender's talent refused to be denied, however,
22 and in 1975, his career was reborn when "Before the Next Teardrop
23 Falls" became a number one hit on both the pop and country charts;
24 he followed "Teardrop" with a remake of his original hit, "Wasted

1 Days and Wasted Nights," and it once again swept the country,
2 becoming his second consecutive number one country song; two more
3 number one smashes from the same multi-platinum album confirmed his
4 status as a major country music star and earned him the 1975 Best
5 Male Artist award from *Billboard* magazine; and

6 WHEREAS, Ever the versatile performer, Mr. Fender enjoyed
7 success as an actor in film and television projects and as an
8 announcer in advertising campaigns; musically, he took his career
9 in a new direction in the 1990s by forming the Texas Tornados with
10 famed Lone Star musicians Doug Sahm, Flaco Jimenez, and Augie
11 Meyers; the band won the 1990 Grammy Award for best
12 Mexican-American performance for its song, "Soy de San Luis," and
13 two more Grammy Awards came to Mr. Fender for later projects, one in
14 1999 for his work with Los Super Seven and one in 2002 for his album
15 *La Musica de Baldemar Huerta*, a tribute to the Spanish-language
16 music of his youth; and

17 WHEREAS, Through the years, this exceptional singer enjoyed
18 the love and support of his family, including his wife, Vangie
19 Huerta, and his children, Baldemar Huerta, Jr., Tammy Loriane
20 Huerta, Daniel Huerta, and Marla Ann Huerta Garcia; the sadness the
21 family felt when Mr. Fender's life drew to a close at the age of 69
22 was shared by countless music fans, but all may rest assured that
23 the evocative and heartfelt songs created by this beloved Texan
24 will continue to be treasured long into the future; now, therefore,
25 be it

26 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 81st Texas
27 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life of Freddy Fender and

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1 recognize his many contributions to the proud musical tradition of
2 the Lone Star State; and, be it further

3 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
4 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of
5 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Freddy
6 Fender.