

By: Rios Ybarra

H.R. No. 1041

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Willacy County lost a respected leader with the
2 passing of the Honorable Simon Salinas on March 9, 2009, at the age
3 of 72; and

4 WHEREAS, A native of the Lone Star State, Simon Salinas was
5 born in Harlingen on January 26, 1937, to Benito and Elena Salinas;
6 he grew up as a migrant worker, and this early experience led him to
7 recognize the importance of hard work and perseverance; he enlisted
8 in the United States Navy and ended his tour of duty as a seaman,
9 earning the Navy Occupation Service Medal with Europe Clasp award
10 for his distinguished service; and

11 WHEREAS, Judge Salinas became involved in community affairs
12 in 1961 as an advocate for a clean water supply for the citizens of
13 Sebastian, and by 1965 he was chairman of the newly formed Sebastian
14 Municipal Water District; he went on to serve several terms on the
15 board of trustees of the Lyford Consolidated Independent School
16 District, and in 1984 he was elected county commissioner for
17 Willacy County; and

18 WHEREAS, This notable Texan was elected county judge in 1994,
19 a position he held until his retirement in 2007; during his tenure,
20 he led the county from a \$1.2 million budget deficit to a
21 financially sound, balanced budget and helped it to gain access to
22 more than \$15 million in state community grants, much of the funds
23 of which went to address the environmental, health, and basic
24 infrastructure needs of colonia residents; and

1 WHEREAS, Judge Salinas also played an integral role in the
2 development of a prison and a detention center in Willacy County,
3 and he worked to encourage the aerospace technology industry to
4 come to the county; and

5 WHEREAS, Devoted to his family, he shared many years with his
6 wife, Estella, and he lovingly helped to raise four children, Noemi
7 Chestnutt, Maria Elena Salinas, Rosario Cedillo, and Joe Salinas;
8 after retiring, he returned to his farm, where he tended to his
9 watermelon patches and other crops; in his free time, he enjoyed
10 traveling the state to find and collect vintage tractors; and

11 WHEREAS, Simon Salinas made significant contributions to
12 Willacy County and its citizens, and although he will be missed by
13 all who knew him, his spirit will live on in their hearts for years
14 to come; now, therefore, be it

15 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 81st Texas
16 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life of the Honorable Simon
17 Salinas and extend deepest sympathy to the members of his family: to
18 his wife, Estella; to his children, Noemi Chestnutt, Maria Elena
19 Salinas, Rosario Cedillo, and Joe Salinas; to his two
20 grandchildren; and to his other relatives and many friends; and, be
21 it further

22 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
23 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of
24 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of former
25 Willacy County Judge Simon Salinas.