

By: Pickett

H.R. No. 1325

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, September 8, 2009, marks the 160th anniversary of  
2 the establishment of Fort Bliss, and this occasion provides a  
3 fitting opportunity to pay tribute to Major Jefferson Van Horne,  
4 the founder and first commander of the post; and

5           WHEREAS, A native of Bucks County, Pennsylvania, Major Van  
6 Horne was born to Dorothy Johns Marple Van Horne and General Isaac  
7 Van Horne, a veteran of the American Revolution; following the  
8 family tradition of military service, he graduated from the U.S.  
9 Military Academy at West Point in 1827, and upheld its motto of  
10 "Duty, Honor, Country" throughout his life; and

11           WHEREAS, His early assignments included frontier duty at  
12 Jefferson Barracks in Missouri and a tour at Fort Smith, Arkansas;  
13 from 1846 to 1848, he served his country in the Mexican War, and his  
14 distinguished efforts earned him promotion to the rank of major;  
15 and

16           WHEREAS, In May 1849, Major Van Horne was instructed to  
17 establish a military post in what is now the El Paso County area; he  
18 departed Camp Salado on June 1, commanding six companies of the  
19 Third Infantry and supporting civilians, a total of nearly 400 men;  
20 and

21           WHEREAS, With 275 wagons, the expedition represented the  
22 longest wagon train to embark westward across Texas; after 100 days  
23 and a 643-mile overland march, Major Van Horne and his men arrived  
24 at their destination on September 8, 1849; and

1           WHEREAS, He served at the post until 1851 and went on to hold  
2 positions in San Elizario, and Fort Filmore and Fort Stanton, New  
3 Mexico; while on leave in his hometown of Zanesville, Ohio, he met  
4 Mary Gilbert, and after exchanging romantic letters for two years,  
5 the couple were married on November 28, 1850; together they had one  
6 son, Lewis Cass Van Horne; and

7           WHEREAS, Major Van Horne's final duty was at the Post of  
8 Albuquerque, where he passed away on September 28, 1857; in 1854,  
9 the El Paso post he founded was named after Lieutenant Colonel  
10 William Bliss, the private secretary, son-in-law, and chief of  
11 staff to President Zachary Taylor; and

12           WHEREAS, The establishment of this important military  
13 facility was accomplished by virtue of Major Van Horne's  
14 leadership, hard work, and steadfast dedication to duty; these  
15 values reflected the spirit of a dynamic and burgeoning nation,  
16 pushing westward to establish new settlements and discover new  
17 opportunities for growth and prosperity; now, therefore, be it

18           RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 81st Texas  
19 Legislature hereby recognize September 8, 2009, as Major Jefferson  
20 Van Horne Remembrance Day in the State of Texas and commemorate the  
21 160th anniversary of the arrival of Major Van Horne and his  
22 expedition in El Paso; and, be it further

23           RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
24 prepared for Major General Howard B. Bromberg, commander of Fort  
25 Bliss and the Army Air Defense Artillery Center and School as an  
26 expression of high regard by the Texas House of Representatives.