

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 927

WHEREAS, September 8, 2009, marks the 160th anniversary of the arrival of Major Jefferson Van Horne and his expedition in El Paso, and this occasion provides a fitting opportunity to pay tribute to the founder and first commander of Fort Bliss; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

S.R. No. 927

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

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this Resolution be prepared for Major General Howard B. Bromberg, commander of Fort Bliss and the Army Air Defense Artillery Center and School, as an expression of high regard from the Texas Senate.

Shapleigh

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on May 15, 2009.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate