

By: Quintanilla

H.R. No. 76

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, On Veterans Day 2011, Texans across the state are
2 pausing to recognize the courage and dedication of our country's
3 armed forces, and this day provides a fitting occasion to pay
4 tribute to United States Army Corporal Eduardo Pedregon of El Paso,
5 who gave his life as a soldier in the Korean War; and

6 WHEREAS, Eduardo Pedregon joined the army shortly after
7 graduating from high school in 1948; he was only 17 when he secured
8 his parents' consent and enlisted; with the outbreak of the Korean
9 War in June 1950, both he and his brother, Bobby, were deployed to
10 repel the invading North Korean troops; Eduardo Pedregon served
11 with Regimental Combat Team 31, a unit made up of elements from the
12 7th Infantry Division, while Bobby Pedregon served with the 187th
13 Airborne RCT; and

14 WHEREAS, By October 1950, the United Nations forces, led by
15 General Douglas MacArthur and composed primarily of American
16 troops, had pushed the North Koreans back beyond the 38th parallel;
17 the following month, General MacArthur ordered an offensive that
18 was intended to end the war by driving all the way up to the Yalu
19 River, on the border between North Korea and China; Regimental
20 Combat Team 31 was hastily assembled and assigned to protect the
21 eastern flank of the 1st Marine Division as it advanced northwest
22 from the Chosin Reservoir; and

23 WHEREAS, Unbeknownst to American commanders, however, a
24 large number of Chinese troops had infiltrated the area around the

1 reservoir, and on the night of November 27 they launched multiple
2 surprise attacks; the ensuing battle lasted some two and a half
3 weeks and was fought over rugged terrain, in temperatures that fell
4 as low as 35 degrees below zero; although undermanned, owing to the
5 fact that it was lacking one battalion, and spread thin, RCT-31
6 fought heroically, repelling its adversaries repeatedly before it
7 was ordered to withdraw on December 1; throughout its retreat,
8 RCT-31 endured a continuing, ferocious assault by Chinese troops,
9 who had been directed by Chairman Mao Zedong to annihilate it; in
10 the end, only about 1,000 of the approximately 2,500 Americans in
11 the 3,000-strong unit survived, and of those, only 385 were combat
12 able at the conclusion of the battle; and

13 WHEREAS, Eduardo Pedregon never returned home from the Battle
14 of Chosin Reservoir; last seen on November 30, 1950, he continued to
15 be listed among the missing until army officials notified his
16 family in March 2011 that his remains had been identified; after
17 more than 60 years, his relatives are at last able to give this
18 brave young Texan a proper burial, in Arlington National Cemetery;
19 and

20 WHEREAS, With the release of Chinese records, it has been
21 learned that RCT-31 faced a Chinese force many times larger than had
22 long been thought; some 20,000 Chinese troops, in fact, squared off
23 against Corporal Pedregon's unit; in spite of those overwhelming
24 odds, RCT-31 succeeded in protecting the eastern flank of the 1st
25 Marine Division for four critical days; that delay enabled the
26 marines to fortify a crucial base on the only escape route available
27 to marine and army forces as they retreated to the port city of

1 Hungnam for evacuation; after the full dimensions of what Corporal
2 Pedregon and his fellow soldiers achieved were finally recognized,
3 RCT-31 was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation in 2000; and

4 WHEREAS, For his selfless efforts and immeasurable
5 sacrifice, Americans owe a debt to Corporal Eduardo Pedregon that
6 can never be repaid; his unfaltering devotion to duty, honor, and
7 this country embodied the highest ideals of the United States Army
8 and contributed to saving the lives of countless marines and fellow
9 soldiers; now, therefore, be it

10 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 82nd Texas
11 Legislature, 1st Called Session, hereby honor the memory of
12 Corporal Eduardo Pedregon and extend to his family sincere sympathy
13 for his loss and deep gratitude for his valiant service; and, be it
14 further

15 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
16 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of
17 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Corporal
18 Eduardo Pedregon.