

By: Gonzales of Hidalgo

H.R. No. 51

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The Rio Grande Valley Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
2 is posthumously awarding its Golden Eagle Award to Michael A. Allen
3 of McAllen during its annual Noche de Gala on January 22, 2011, and
4 this special occasion marks a fitting opportunity to pay tribute to
5 the life and achievements of this remarkable community servant; and

6 WHEREAS, Mike Allen was born in 1937 in New Kensington,
7 Pennsylvania; his family moved to Port Lavaca when he was a child,
8 and he attended St. Anthony Catholic High School in San Antonio; he
9 studied at the Oblate School of Theology and was ordained as a
10 Catholic priest in 1963; and

11 WHEREAS, During his years as a priest, Mr. Allen served a
12 number of parishes in the Rio Grande Valley, including Sacred Heart
13 in McAllen and Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mission; after leaving the
14 priesthood in the 1970s, he moved to Austin for a time, and then
15 returned to McAllen; he was joined in matrimony to his wife,
16 Theresa, in 1991, and together they enjoyed a fulfilling
17 relationship until his death; and

18 WHEREAS, In 1988, Mr. Allen was named as the first president
19 and CEO of the McAllen Economic Development Corporation, and he
20 played a leading role in the expansion of the maquiladora industry
21 in the Rio Grande Valley, helping to improve relations with Mexico,
22 establish the foreign trade zone, and create jobs in McAllen; and

23 WHEREAS, During his 18-year tenure as leader of the MEDC, Mr.
24 Allen helped attract 206 new businesses and thousands of jobs to the

1 McAllen area; his efforts also helped to draw 292 businesses and
2 many new jobs to Reynosa, across the border in Mexico, thus forging
3 strong ties between the two cities; and

4 WHEREAS, In 1998, Mr. Allen helped to establish the Texas
5 Border Coalition, bringing together officials and businesspersons
6 all along the border from Brownsville to El Paso; he also cofounded
7 a coalition of five Hidalgo County communities, the South Texas
8 Border Partnership; he was instrumental in the campaign to develop
9 the new Anzalduas International Bridge at McAllen as well as the
10 proposed Interstate 69 highway; and

11 WHEREAS, Mr. Allen was a founder of South Texas Community
12 College, now called South Texas College, and he served as a trustee
13 for the college from 2004 until his death; he was a member of the
14 American Economic Development Council, the Reynosa Maquila
15 Association, the Texas Good Roads and Transportation Association,
16 the Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council, and the Rio Grande
17 Valley Partnership Chamber of Commerce, among others; he also
18 served on the board of the Rio Grande Valley Council of Governments
19 and as a member of the Governor's Task Force on Management and Labor
20 Relations; and

21 WHEREAS, Known to his friends and admirers as "Padre Mike,"
22 this gifted and energetic man was recognized by the City of Hidalgo
23 as 2006 Border Texan of the Year, and in 2009 he earned the
24 prestigious Road Hand Award from the Texas Department of
25 Transportation in recognition of his work to improve the valley's
26 highways; and

27 WHEREAS, Until his death on August 25, 2010, Mike Allen

1 worked tirelessly to provide economic opportunity and improve the
2 quality of life for the residents of McAllen and the Rio Grande
3 Valley, and he is indeed worthy of recognition for his years of
4 service and many achievements; now, therefore, be it

5 RESOLVED, That Michael A. Allen's receipt of the Golden Eagle
6 Award from the Rio Grande Valley Hispanic Chamber of Commerce be
7 commemorated and that the life and legacy of this outstanding
8 community leader be honored; and, be it further

9 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
10 prepared for his family as an expression of high regard by the Texas
11 House of Representatives.