

By: Garza

H.R. No. 494

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, Blas Maria Herrera, a soldier and rancher often  
2 called the Paul Revere of the Texas Revolution, earned a place of  
3 honor in the annals of early Texas history; and

4           WHEREAS, Born in San Antonio de Bexar on February 2, 1802, Mr.  
5 Herrera married Maria Antonio Ruiz, the daughter of the prominent  
6 Tejano Jose Francisco Ruiz, on February 3, 1828; and

7           WHEREAS, A militia roster of 1820 lists Mr. Herrera as a  
8 sergeant, and his military skills and knowledge of the Texas  
9 countryside proved valuable when he cast his lot with those seeking  
10 to establish an independent Texas republic; and

11           WHEREAS, While serving under the command of Captain Juan  
12 Nepomuceno Seguin, Mr. Herrera took part in the first major  
13 campaign of the Texas Revolution, the siege of Bexar, in late 1835;  
14 early the next year, Captain Seguin dispatched Mr. Herrera to the  
15 Rio Grande to observe the movement of Mexican troops and to report  
16 any advance they might make on San Antonio; and

17           WHEREAS, When it became apparent that General Antonio Lopez  
18 de Santa Anna was headed with his army in the direction of Bexar,  
19 Mr. Herrera and a fellow scout hastened back to warn the Texan  
20 troops; and

21           WHEREAS, Mr. Herrera then received orders to escort his  
22 father-in-law and his wife's cousin, Jose Antonio Navarro, to the  
23 convention of Texas delegates meeting at Washington-on-the-Brazos,  
24 where the two signed the Texas Declaration of Independence on March

1 2, 1836; according to family lore, Mr. Herrera also conducted  
2 intelligence assignments during the revolution for General Sam  
3 Houston; and

4 WHEREAS, In late 1836, Mr. Herrera was sent by Captain Seguin  
5 to argue against General Felix Huston's order that the citizens of  
6 San Antonio be evacuated and the town burned, and he succeeded in  
7 having the town spared; and

8 WHEREAS, After the revolution, Mr. Herrera continued to be  
9 involved in public life; he served as a justice of the peace and  
10 civic leader in southern Bexar County, where he farmed and ranched  
11 on his family's land near the Paso de las Garzas on the Medina  
12 River, and his home was used as a polling place; and

13 WHEREAS, Mr. Herrera also served as a Texas Ranger in 1839,  
14 during a campaign against the Comanches; his ranch became the site  
15 of the area's first Catholic church in 1840 and first post office in  
16 1868, as well as a public school in 1872; and

17 WHEREAS, The children of Mr. Herrera and his wife were also  
18 civic minded and engaged in both military and public service; one  
19 descendant, great-grandson John J. Herrera, became a prominent  
20 civil rights attorney and served as national president of the  
21 League of United Latin American Citizens; and

22 WHEREAS, Blas Maria Herrera died on July 9, 1878, and was  
23 buried in the Ruiz-Herrera Cemetery in present-day Von Ormy; in the  
24 1980s, a set of gates on the Herrera Ranch was identified as having  
25 come from one of the San Antonio missions, most likely from San  
26 Antonio de Valero, now known as the Alamo; thanks to the generosity  
27 of Mr. Herrera's descendants, those gates are now on permanent

1 display at the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum in Austin; and

2 WHEREAS, Deeply devoted to the land of his birth, Blas Maria  
3 Herrera served Texas in many roles over the course of his long and  
4 productive life, and his descendants continue to carry the torch,  
5 to the great benefit of the Lone Star State; now, therefore, be it

6 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 82nd Texas  
7 Legislature hereby honor Blas Maria Herrera for his outstanding  
8 contributions to Texas and recognize his descendants for their  
9 generosity in providing the historic Herrera Gates to the Bob  
10 Bullock Texas State History Museum; and, be it further

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