

By: Gallego

H.R. No. 892

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, In the 1950s, the golf team of San Felipe High School
2 in Del Rio battled adversity and defied expectations to become the
3 best in Texas, and Felipe Romero was an important member of that
4 storied squad; and

5 WHEREAS, The team got its start after J. B. Pena became the
6 superintendent of the San Felipe Independent School District in the
7 mid-1950s, and he and a friend introduced golf as a school sport at
8 San Felipe High; they were surprised and pleased to discover that
9 there were some very talented golfers among the students in the
10 then-segregated school, including Mr. Romero and the other players
11 that joined the Mustangs golf team; and

12 WHEREAS, These students had learned much about the game while
13 working as caddies at the exclusive San Felipe Country Club, a
14 course that they were initially prohibited from playing; determined
15 to take part in the sport, several of these aspiring athletes
16 decided in 1954 to build their own course, which they dubbed the El
17 Llanito Country Club; it was, by necessity, a rather crude design:
18 one hole surrounded by multiple tees with a "green" that was
19 actually made of caliche instead of grass; nonetheless, the boys
20 used the hardscrabble course to hone their skills through long
21 hours of practice, often playing until after dark; and

22 WHEREAS, After the harsh conditions of El Llanito, the team
23 members found that competing on regulation courses as part of
24 school matches was relatively easy, and they quickly established

1 themselves as winners, even as they had to ignore verbal abuse and
2 other forms of discrimination; the San Felipe Mustangs were
3 regional champs in 1956 and finished second to Ranger High in the
4 state championships; in 1957, the team qualified once more for the
5 finals and traveled to the Austin Country Club to battle for the
6 title, where they were the only minority players in the tournament;
7 there, Mr. Romero and his teammates turned in an outstanding
8 performance, shooting a combined 643; this bested runner-up
9 Shamrock High by 35 strokes and earned San Felipe the state title;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, Though he was only in his sophomore year in 1957, Mr.
12 Romero was the silver medalist in the tournament, posting the
13 second-best individual score; he continued playing during his
14 junior and senior years before graduating in 1959; after high
15 school, he attended the first national PGA Business School in San
16 Antonio and learned the business side of golf; for the next 30
17 years, he competed professionally in national and international
18 golf mini-tours while working as a bus conductor and instructor for
19 the Metropolitan Transit Authority in Houston; now retired, he is
20 still an active golfer; and

21 WHEREAS, Through talent, determination, and ingenuity,
22 Felipe Romero and the other members of the Mustangs golf team
23 overcame difficult circumstances to become state champions, and
24 their achievement is a continuing source of pride for the residents
25 of Del Rio and an inspiration for all who have heard their story;
26 now, therefore, be it

27 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 82nd Texas

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1 Legislature hereby honor Felipe Romero for his contributions to the
2 title-winning San Felipe High School golf team of 1957 and extend to
3 him sincere best wishes for the future; and, be it further

4 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
5 prepared for Mr. Romero as an expression of high regard by the Texas
6 House of Representatives.