

By: Guillen

H.R. No. 1887

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The late Ramiro Barrera, Sr., played a vital role as
2 an educator and community leader in Starr County for many decades,
3 and his life and legacy are indeed worthy of tribute; and

4 WHEREAS, Ramiro Barrera was born in Los Saenz in 1920 to
5 Trinidad and Benilde Barrera, both of whom were descended from
6 founding families of the historic border village; his father was a
7 rancher and his mother ran a small neighborhood store, and together
8 they instilled a strong work ethic in their children, who were all
9 expected to pitch in to help operate the family businesses; by the
10 time he was six, Ramiro would rise early in the morning and trek
11 several miles to carry breakfast to the herdsman watching over his
12 father's goats; he would then return home with milk for his family;
13 it was on these daily journeys that he began to develop his
14 appreciation for the native flora and fauna of the Texas-Mexico
15 border region; and

16 WHEREAS, An avid student, Mr. Barrera attended Los Saenz
17 Elementary for four years, after which he went to Roma Elementary;
18 he then progressed to Roma High School, where he was taught by the
19 Sisters of Mercy, who imparted to him a love for literature and
20 learning and helped him to develop discipline through their firm
21 but kind methods; because Roma High School only offered instruction
22 through the 11th grade, he continued his education at Rio Grande
23 High School in Rio Grande City, graduating with honors in 1937; and

24 WHEREAS, Determined to pursue his dream of obtaining a

1 college education, even though the country was still mired in the
2 Great Depression and money was scarce, Mr. Barrera enrolled at the
3 Texas College of Arts and Industries in Kingsville; to help pay for
4 tuition, he began teaching elementary school in Garceno, and he
5 went on to teach at schools in Fronton and Chapeno; and

6 WHEREAS, Mr. Barrera's studies were interrupted by the
7 outbreak of World War II; answering his nation's call to duty, he
8 joined the U.S. Army in 1941; during his four years in the military
9 he served in England, Scotland, France, and on special assignment
10 in Portugal; and

11 WHEREAS, After his discharge from the army in 1945,
12 Mr. Barrera returned to Kingsville to complete his degree with the
13 financial assistance of the GI Bill; during this time he met his
14 wife, the former Crescencia Izaguirre, and the couple were joined
15 in matrimony in May 1950; and

16 WHEREAS, In 1948, Mr. Barrera returned to Los Saenz
17 Elementary to serve as head teacher; he worked at the school for two
18 and a half years before accepting an offer to teach social studies
19 at San Isidro High School; during the summers he continued to pursue
20 his education at Southwest Texas State College in San Marcos, where
21 he earned a master's degree in education in 1954; he began his
22 career in education administration that same year, when he joined
23 the Roma Independent School District as a junior high principal;
24 the next year he became the principal of Roma High School, a
25 position he held for 22 years; during his tenure there, he helped
26 guide the school through a time of steady growth and success; and

27 WHEREAS, Mr. Barrera retired as principal of Roma High School

1 in 1978, at the age of 58; he then joined the Southwest Educational
2 Development Laboratory as a part-time consultant and researcher,
3 working with several schools in Starr County; after four years with
4 SEDL, he retired from education for good in order to spend time with
5 his wife and family and to focus on his ranches in Starr and Zapata
6 Counties; he remained in touch with former colleagues through his
7 involvement with the Roma Retired Teachers Association; and

8 WHEREAS, A respected member of his community, Mr. Barrera was
9 active in Our Lady of Refuge Church in Roma, and he volunteered his
10 time with a number of organizations devoted to helping others;
11 moreover, he was a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the
12 Knights of Columbus, holding third-degree Knight status with the
13 Roma chapter and fourth-degree Knight status with the Rio Grande
14 City chapter; he also worked with the Starr County Historical
15 Society to preserve the history of the area, and he provided
16 valuable assistance with researching the early days of Roma and Los
17 Saenz and the communities' founding families; and

18 WHEREAS, Mr. Barrera further dedicated himself to preserving
19 the environment and natural resources of the area; his efforts were
20 recognized by the Rio Bravo Resource Conservation District, which
21 honored him with its Distinguished Service Award for 17 years of
22 service, and by the Starr County Soil and Water Conservation
23 District, which presented him with an award for 22 years of service;
24 and

25 WHEREAS, During his nearly 40 years in the field of
26 education, Mr. Barrera had a significant impact on the lives of
27 countless young people, and he had the great pleasure of seeing many

1 of his students grow up to enjoy successful and productive lives; on
2 March 29, 2007, the Roma Independent School District named its
3 newest campus the Ramiro Barrera Middle School, in honor of his
4 exceptional service as a teacher and an administrator; and

5 WHEREAS, Although Ramiro Barrera, Sr., passed away in 2004,
6 his memory lives on in his children, Annabel Pena and Dr. Ramiro
7 Barrera, Jr., and in his five grandchildren, Daniel Barrera, Angela
8 Barrera, Aaron Pena, Adrian Pena, and Ariel Pena; they inherited
9 from him the same dedication to education, conservation, and
10 community service that made him a role model to many of his former
11 students and colleagues; and

12 WHEREAS, Deeply devoted to his family and community, Ramiro
13 Barrera, Sr., made a meaningful difference in the lives of his loved
14 ones and fellow citizens alike, and his contributions will be
15 fondly remembered for years to come; now, therefore, be it

16 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 82nd Texas
17 Legislature hereby honor the memory of Ramiro Barrera, Sr., for his
18 extensive public service; and, be it further

19 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
20 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of
21 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Ramiro
22 Barrera, Sr.