

By: Guillen

H.R. No. 2390

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, Citizens of Starr County continue to benefit from  
2 the enormous contributions of esteemed civic leader Manuel  
3 Benavidez, Jr., who passed away on March 28, 2009, at the age of 57;  
4 and

5           WHEREAS, A former migrant worker, Mr. Benavidez earned his  
6 bachelor's degree in bilingual education from The University of  
7 Texas-Pan American in 1986 and went on to dedicate himself to  
8 improving access to higher education for all; he was appointed as a  
9 founding member of the South Texas College Board of Trustees in 1993  
10 to represent Starr County in the development of a new community  
11 college district, and he was subsequently elected to his seat for  
12 two six-year terms; a powerful advocate, he galvanized the campaign  
13 for establishment of a taxing district and the issuance of \$20  
14 million in bonds for initial construction of five STC  
15 campuses/centers, and during his term as chair, he played a crucial  
16 role in the passage of a \$98.7 million bond package and a tax  
17 increase to fund operating costs of the college; and

18           WHEREAS, Mr. Benavidez successfully championed many  
19 innovative programs to benefit STC and residents of South Texas;  
20 his leadership at the local and state levels was key to the passage  
21 of legislation allowing eligible high school students to dually  
22 enroll in college-level technical courses, to the development of  
23 the Dual Enrollment Academy for Medical Sciences at STC, to the  
24 selection of STC for a pilot bachelor's degree program in applied

1 technology, and to securing appropriations for UT-Pan American to  
2 create an upper-level university center in Starr County; moreover,  
3 his vision was instrumental in the founding of a technology center  
4 at the county STC campus, which was dedicated as the Manuel  
5 Benavidez, Jr., Rural Technology Center in 2010; previously, the  
6 Starr County Commissioners Court declared November 2002 as Manuel  
7 Benavidez, Jr., Month to recognize his remarkable accomplishments;  
8 and

9 WHEREAS, At the national level, Mr. Benavidez shared his  
10 expertise as a member of the Association of Community College  
11 Trustees Diversity Committee, serving two terms as chair; the ACCT  
12 gave him its Lifetime Membership Award in 2005, and that same year,  
13 he and STC won the organization's Western Region Equity Award; in  
14 addition, Mr. Benavidez enhanced quality of life in Starr County  
15 through his tireless service on the Lower Rio Grande Valley  
16 Workforce Development Board and in myriad other capacities; and

17 WHEREAS, Although it is impossible to gauge the full effect  
18 of a life so devoted to the community, the exceptional  
19 accomplishments of Manuel Benavidez continue to resonate as the  
20 years go by; now, therefore, be it

21 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 82nd Texas  
22 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life and achievements of  
23 Manuel Benavidez, Jr., and extend sincere condolences to his loved  
24 ones; and, be it further

25 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
26 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of  
27 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Manuel

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1 Benavidez, Jr.