

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 471

WHEREAS, Proud residents of the Mid-Valley region of Texas are gathering in Austin on March 9, 2011, to celebrate Mid-Valley Day at the State Capitol; and

WHEREAS, Located in eastern Hidalgo County in the Rio Grande Valley, the Mid-Valley region includes the towns of Alamo, Donna, Mercedes, Progreso, Progreso Lakes, San Juan, and Weslaco; this area is a center for agribusiness, with farmers producing sugarcane, grains, and citrus fruit such as grapefruits and oranges; and

WHEREAS, The city of Alamo is located in close proximity to the Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge, which comprises more than 2,000 acres of protected land and is home to a wide array of animals and plants; in addition, the town boasts a birding information center and the recently renovated Alamo Central Park; and

WHEREAS, Upholding the motto "the City with a Heart in the Heart of the Rio Grande Valley," Donna recently celebrated the opening of the Donna-Rio Bravo International Bridge; representing a federal investment of \$110 million over 10 years, the bridge is expected to facilitate shopping, tourism, and commercial trade to and from Mexico; and

WHEREAS, Mercedes has long been a major center for the processing and marketing of livestock, cotton, and vegetables, and it is also known for its boot makers and the shopping opportunities at the Rio Grande Valley Premium Outlets; the annual Rio Grande Valley Livestock Show and Rodeo draws more than 200,000 people to town each year, and the event provides valuable scholarship funds for 4-H and FFA students; and

WHEREAS, In addition to being centers for the sugarcane business, Progreso and Progreso Lakes have been serving as gateways to the Rio Grande Valley since the opening of the international bridge between Progreso and Nuevo Progreso in 2003; and

WHEREAS, Fast-growing San Juan is the home of the Basilica of Our Lady of San Juan del Valle National Shrine, which attracts multitudes of pilgrims from throughout the United States and Mexico; the town hosts an annual Spring Fiesta and is the site of numerous parks, including Liberty Park, with its flagpole monument that honors those who have served in the United States armed forces; and

WHEREAS, The city of Weslaco has become a favorite destination for tourists, golfers, retirees, and birders and is the location of two important Texas A&M University research stations; the annual Onion Fest celebrates the development of the famous Texas 1015 onion in Weslaco, and this popular event brings many visitors to the city; and

WHEREAS, Throughout the Mid-Valley region, great emphasis is placed on the value of education, and one particularly striking example of the area's educational achievements came in 2010, when Newsweek ranked the Science Academy of South Texas in Mercedes as number 12 on its list of "America's Best High Schools"; and

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WHEREAS, The residents of this dynamic region of the Lone Star State are justifiably proud of their hard work, civic commitment, and innovative spirit, and their efforts have created a group of notable Texas communities that are well prepared to meet the challenges and opportunities of the future; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 82nd Legislature, hereby recognize March 9, 2011, as Mid-Valley Day at the State Capitol and extend to the visiting delegation sincere best wishes for an informative and enjoyable stay in Austin; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be prepared to commemorate this special occasion.

Lucio

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on March 9, 2011.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate