

By: Villarreal

H.R. No. 432

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, The legendary "Victory or Death" letter dispatched  
2 by Lieutenant Colonel William B. Travis is being exhibited at the  
3 Alamo in San Antonio from February 23 to March 7, 2013, the first  
4 time the letter will have returned to the Alamo since it was drafted  
5 there 177 years ago; and

6           WHEREAS, Colonel Travis, commander of the Texan forces at the  
7 Alamo, penned the document on February 24, 1836, shortly after a  
8 Mexican army under General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna laid siege to  
9 the garrison; the letter called on its readers "in the name of  
10 Liberty, of patriotism & everything dear to the American character,  
11 to come to our aid, with all dispatch"; and

12           WHEREAS, In his plea for reinforcements, Colonel Travis wrote  
13 with great eloquence and passion of his determination to defy the  
14 Mexican army, even under the threat of certain death; after a  
15 bombardment that had lasted 24 hours and a demand that the garrison  
16 surrender, he wrote, "I have answered the demand with a cannon shot,  
17 & our flag still waves proudly from the walls--I shall never  
18 surrender or retreat," and he ended his letter with the famous *cri*  
19 *de coeur*, "Victory or Death," boldly underlined three times; and

20           WHEREAS, Smuggled out of the Alamo under cover of darkness,  
21 the letter inspired 32 men from Gonzales to join the garrison on  
22 March 1, 1836, and after the Alamo fell on the morning of March 6,  
23 the letter further inflamed the hearts of the Texan rebels, who  
24 rallied to defeat General Santa Anna and his troops at the Battle of

1 San Jacinto on April 21, 1836; and

2 WHEREAS, This historic letter has not returned to the Alamo  
3 since Colonel Travis entrusted it to his courier, and the effort to  
4 bring it back to one of the most revered locations in the Lone Star  
5 State was led by Texas land commissioner Jerry Patterson and  
6 coordinated by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, the  
7 Texas General Land Office archives, and the Daughters of the  
8 Republic of Texas; the letter will be escorted under armed guard to  
9 the Alamo and displayed for the public during the 177th anniversary  
10 of the famous siege and battle; and

11 WHEREAS, The Travis "Victory or Death" letter is one of the  
12 most stirring embodiments of the spirit of liberty in American  
13 history, and this exhibition offers a rare opportunity to view this  
14 Texas icon in its original, storied setting; now, therefore, be it

15 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 83rd Texas  
16 Legislature hereby commemorate the display of the Travis "Victory  
17 or Death" letter at the Alamo and extend to all those involved in  
18 the project sincere gratitude for their efforts.