

By: Guerra

H.R. No. 1923

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Ann Williams Cass has dedicated herself to assisting
2 economically disadvantaged residents of the Rio Grande Valley for
3 more than three decades, and her steadfast commitment has made a
4 positive difference in many lives; and

5 WHEREAS, Ms. Cass completed her undergraduate studies in
6 biochemistry at Marycrest/St. Ambrose College and holds a master's
7 degree in parish administration and liturgy from Loyola University;
8 after moving to South Texas in 1981, she helped establish Holy
9 Spirit Parish in McAllen and then worked as an administrator for the
10 United Farm Workers from 1984 to 1988 before returning to her work
11 in the parish; and

12 WHEREAS, In 1989, Ms. Cass was appointed as the pastoral
13 administrator at Holy Spirit; during her tenure, she was involved
14 in refugee assistance and the sanctuary movement and served on the
15 National Advisory Council to the U.S. Conference of Catholic
16 Bishops; on the local level, she campaigned for higher wages for
17 school district employees and the creation of single-member
18 districts for the city of McAllen; and

19 WHEREAS, She helped organize the employees of six parishes to
20 join the United Farm Workers Union in 2000 and later worked with the
21 South Texas Civil Rights Project to successfully win reinstatement
22 for those workers who had been wrongfully terminated for their
23 participation; that endeavor ultimately helped to establish new
24 union membership policies for all employees in the diocese; and

1 WHEREAS, In 2006, Ms. Cass became the executive director of
2 Proyecto Azteca, a housing organization that had been founded in
3 1991 with the help of the United Farm Workers, Texas Rural Legal
4 Aid, and the Texas Low-Income Housing Information Service; under
5 her guidance, the group has enabled more than 700 families in
6 Hidalgo County colonias to become homeowners by providing them with
7 financing and construction assistance so that they could build
8 their own houses; moreover, since 2011, she and her colleagues have
9 been overseeing the development of one of the first environmentally
10 sustainable mixed-income neighborhoods in the region; and

11 WHEREAS, Active in a broad range of other organizations and
12 initiatives as well, Ms. Cass is a cofounder of Hope Family Health
13 Center and Call to Action-Rio Grande Valley, and she is a member of
14 the Hidalgo County Drainage Advisory Committee as well as
15 committees focused on bioethics, housing, and health care; her
16 impressive record in the field of social justice is being honored in
17 May 2013 with her receipt of the Dr. Hector P. Garcia Human Rights
18 Award from the South Texas Civil Rights Project; and

19 WHEREAS, Through her leadership and dedication, Ann Cass has
20 been a source of encouragement and empowerment for colonia
21 residents and for other vulnerable individuals in South Texas, and
22 her work is indeed deserving of special recognition; now,
23 therefore, be it

24 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 83rd Texas
25 Legislature hereby commend Ann Williams Cass for her many
26 accomplishments in behalf of the greater good and extend to her
27 sincere best wishes for continued success; and, be it further

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1 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
2 prepared for Ms. Cass as an expression of high regard by the Texas
3 House of Representatives.