

By: Campbell, Zaffirini

S.C.R. No. 44

1                                   SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2           WHEREAS, The Texas Legislative Medal of Honor was established  
3 to recognize gallant and intrepid service by a member of the state  
4 or federal military forces, and Cleto L. Rodriguez proved himself a  
5 deserving recipient of this prestigious award; and

6           WHEREAS, Born in San Marcos on April 26, 1923, Cleto  
7 Rodriguez lost both his parents when he was nine, and he moved to  
8 San Antonio to live with relatives; he joined the United States Army  
9 in 1944, becoming a private in Company B of the 148th Infantry; and

10          WHEREAS, On February 9, 1945, during the battle for Manila in  
11 the Philippines, Private Rodriguez and his unit were advancing on  
12 the heavily defended Paco Railroad Station when they were pinned  
13 down by intense enemy fire; at that point, Private Rodriguez and  
14 Private First Class John Reese took the initiative to charge the  
15 enemy position; the two men reached a house 60 yards from the  
16 Japanese emplacements, and from that location, under the gaze of  
17 enemy gunners, they killed 35 combatants; and

18          WHEREAS, On moving closer to their objective, the pair  
19 spotted Japanese reinforcements moving toward the station;  
20 Privates Rodriguez and Reese killed more than 40 of the group, which  
21 discouraged further attempts to reinforce the Japanese defenses;  
22 Private Reese then provided covering fire as Private Rodriguez ran  
23 forward and lobbed five grenades into the station doorway,  
24 destroying a 20mm gun and a heavy machine gun and eliminating their

1 crews; as the pair withdrew to their own lines, Private Reese was  
2 mortally wounded; and

3 WHEREAS, The bold actions of Privates Rodriguez and Reese  
4 threw Japanese defenses at the station into disarray and made  
5 possible the subsequent seizure of the stronghold; two days later,  
6 Private Rodriguez again enabled his comrades to move forward when  
7 he singlehandedly killed six more enemy soldiers and took out  
8 another 20mm gun; for having materially aided the advance of United  
9 States troops in Manila, he was awarded the Medal of Honor; and

10 WHEREAS, Upon his return to San Antonio, Cleto Rodriguez was  
11 presented with the key to the city; he worked as a representative  
12 for the Veterans Administration and then served in the United  
13 States Air Force from 1952 to 1954 and in the army from 1955 to 1970,  
14 rising to the rank of master sergeant before his retirement; over  
15 the years, he also served his community as a member of the League of  
16 United Latin American Citizens; his boyhood elementary school was  
17 renamed in his honor in 1975; and

18 WHEREAS, Married to Flora Muniz in November 1945, Cleto  
19 Rodriguez became the proud father of four children; he passed away  
20 on December 7, 1990, and was buried at Fort Sam Houston National  
21 Cemetery; the following year, a section of United States Route 90 in  
22 San Antonio was named after him; the city has two murals featuring  
23 his likeness, at the Cassiano Homes housing project and at the San  
24 Antonio Central Library; and

25 WHEREAS, Cleto Rodriguez repeatedly risked his life to  
26 complete his mission and save the lives of his fellow soldiers, and  
27 for his remarkable heroism, he is most assuredly deserving of this

1 state's supreme military award; now, therefore, be it

2       RESOLVED, That the 84th Legislature of the State of Texas  
3 hereby direct the governor of the State of Texas to posthumously  
4 award the Texas Legislative Medal of Honor to Cleto L. Rodriguez in  
5 recognition of his valiant service during World War II.