

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 144

WHEREAS, A distinguished delegation from South Texas is visiting Austin on February 10, 2015, to celebrate Rio Grande Valley Day at the State Capitol; and

WHEREAS, Enjoying a strategic location on the Gulf of Mexico and along the Mexican border, the Rio Grande Valley was an important ranching region when Texas became the nation's 28th state in 1845; over time, the economy shifted from ranching to agriculture, and the Valley became the state's center of citrus and vegetable production; and

WHEREAS, In the 1960s, industry flourished and international trade became increasingly prominent; the region has contributed significantly to the tremendous increase in commerce across the United States-Mexico border, which now averages more than \$1.3 billion in goods and services per day, and also accounts for a major portion of the \$4.5 billion a year that Mexican nationals spend on retail purchases in Texas; and

WHEREAS, The Valley has over 1.3 million residents, and local and state officials have focused on the need to expand access to higher education, strengthen the workforce, and introduce pioneering businesses, such as United Launch Alliance, which has been engineering rockets in the area for over a decade, and now, SpaceX, which promises to be the Rio Grande Valley's gateway to space exploration; furthermore, in 2013, the legislature created The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, partnering with SpaceX to create STARGATE, the university's first research center of excellence; the university is enrolling its first class in Fall 2015, and the new University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Medical School is slated to open the following year; and

WHEREAS, The focus for today's special legislative event is border security, workforce development, infrastructure, and higher education, and major sponsors include The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, the City of Harlingen, the City of Edinburg, the City of McAllen, the Port of Brownsville, the Rio Grande Valley Partnership, the McAllen Chamber of Commerce, the Mission Economic Development Corporation, South Texas College, the Anzalduas International Bridge, the McAllen Economic Development Corporation, the Edinburg Economic Development Corporation, and the Edinburg Chamber of Commerce; several private sector businesses, such as American Electric Power, Linebarger, and Texas Regional Bank, are also promoting greater regional cooperation in the 21st century; and

WHEREAS, A vibrant region with a rich heritage, the Rio Grande Valley is poised to take advantage of tremendous opportunities for continued economic development, and it is indeed most fitting to honor Valley residents for their dedication to building a bright and prosperous future for the area; now, therefore, be it

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RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 84th Legislature, hereby recognize February 10, 2015, as Rio Grande Valley Day at the State Capitol and extend to all participants sincere best wishes for a productive and enjoyable visit.

Hinojosa, Lucio

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on February 10, 2015.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate

Member, Texas Senate