

By: Stephenson

H.C.R. No. 76

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, U.S. Army Master Sergeant Roy Perez Benavidez built
2 a distinguished military career that spanned nearly a quarter
3 century, and his bravery and self-sacrifice in the service of his
4 fellow Americans have become legendary; and

5 WHEREAS, The son of Salvador Benavidez and Teresa Perez, Roy
6 Benavidez was born in Lindenau on August 5, 1935; he answered his
7 nation's call to duty in 1952, enlisting in the Texas Army National
8 Guard, and three years later, he joined the U.S. Army; after
9 completing airborne training in 1959, he was assigned to the 82nd
10 Airborne Division at Fort Bragg in North Carolina; he went on to
11 join the elite Army Special Forces and became a member of the 5th
12 Special Forces and the Studies and Observations Groups; and

13 WHEREAS, Sergeant Benavidez was deployed to Southeast Asia in
14 1965 as an advisor to an infantry regiment in the Army of the
15 Republic of Vietnam; one day, while on patrol, he was seriously
16 injured when he stepped on a land mine, and he was subsequently
17 evacuated to the United States; though doctors believed he had
18 permanently lost the use of his legs, he remained determined to
19 continue his military service, and in July 1966, more than a year
20 after he was injured, he was able to walk out of the hospital; two
21 years later, he returned to South Vietnam; and

22 WHEREAS, On the morning of May 2, 1968, while assigned to
23 Detachment B56, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), 1st Special
24 Forces, west of Loc Ninh, Sergeant Benavidez heard a distress call

1 from a 12-man Special Forces Reconnaissance Team that was pinned
2 down by a North Vietnamese Army battalion of about 1,000 soldiers;
3 he quickly volunteered to assist in an extraction attempt, and
4 after reaching the battle zone, he ran through withering enemy fire
5 to reach his comrades, sustaining multiple injuries; despite
6 agonizing pain, he loaded the wounded and dead members of the team
7 onto the aircraft, but then the pilot was killed and the helicopter
8 crashed; Sergeant Benavidez quickly called in tactical air strikes
9 and directed fire from supporting gunships, enabling another
10 extraction helicopter to land; over the course of the six-hour
11 fight, he received dozens of bullet, bayonet, and shrapnel wounds,
12 and his valiant actions saved the lives of at least eight men and
13 prevented classified documents from falling into enemy hands; and

14 WHEREAS, In recognition of his heroism, Sergeant Benavidez
15 was presented with the Medal of Honor by President Ronald Reagan on
16 February 24, 1981; this courageous Texan was also the recipient of
17 the Purple Heart with four oak-leaf clusters, the Defense
18 Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Army
19 Commendation Medal, and the Vietnam Service Medal with four
20 campaign stars; and

21 WHEREAS, After retiring with the rank of master sergeant in
22 1976, Roy Benavidez returned home to his wife, Hilaria, and their
23 three children in El Campo; during the ensuing years, he spoke often
24 at the invitation of schools, military and civic groups, and
25 businesses, and he wrote several books recounting his life
26 experiences, including *The Three Wars of Roy Benavidez* and *Medal of*
27 *Honor: A Vietnam Warrior's Story*; he passed away on November 29,

1 1998, at the age of 63; and

2 WHEREAS, Through his unfaltering courage and devotion to
3 duty, Master Sergeant Benavidez exemplified the highest ideals of
4 the U.S. armed forces; his actions and accomplishments are an
5 inspiration to all Americans, and he is truly deserving of special
6 recognition for his notable contributions as a soldier and patriot;
7 now, therefore, be it

8 RESOLVED, That the 85th Legislature of the State of Texas
9 hereby pay tribute to the life of U.S. Army Master Sergeant Roy P.
10 Benavidez and to his exceptional service in behalf of his nation.