

By: Raymond

H.C.R. No. 88

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, Laredo has taken on ever-increasing national
2 security responsibilities since the advent of the North American
3 Free Trade Agreement in 1994, but it is ineligible for federal
4 Targeted Infrastructure Capability grants because such grants are
5 based primarily on population criteria rather than threat
6 assessment; and

7 WHEREAS, The gateway for the nation's main NAFTA corridor,
8 Laredo has four international bridges and carries 50 percent of all
9 NAFTA-related trade through Texas; as of 2015, the city ranked as
10 the number one inland port in the country with over \$284 billion in
11 trade, and hazardous materials constitute almost half of the cargo
12 that travels through the Laredo corridor by land and rail; the city
13 also has more than 5,000 acres of warehouse space, at least a
14 quarter of which contains hazardous materials vulnerable to
15 terrorism; and

16 WHEREAS, The volume of hazardous materials transiting
17 through Laredo presents enormous potential for a disaster, and
18 first responders must be prepared for a chemical spill or hazardous
19 materials release; moreover, 15,000 visitors cross into the city
20 every day, at a time when drug-related violence on the other side of
21 the border is increasing; frontline emergency personnel also
22 respond to incidents on the Rio Grande, which is the chief source of
23 drinking water for many border communities, and to any bomb threats
24 reported on the international bridges, as well as to an ever-rising

1 number of other emergency calls in a growing community; and

2 WHEREAS, The Department of Homeland Security currently
3 awards its Targeted Infrastructure Capability grants largely on the
4 basis of metropolitan population, and with an estimated population
5 of about 255,000, Laredo does not meet the criteria for grants such
6 as the Urban Area Strategic Initiative or Port Security awards; and

7 WHEREAS, Laredo is smaller than other major United States
8 ports, and it has a much more limited budget for local agencies;
9 federal funds are desperately needed to ensure that emergency
10 responders can manage international threats to critical
11 infrastructure safely and efficiently; now, therefore, be it

12 RESOLVED, That the 85th Legislature of the State of Texas
13 hereby respectfully urge the United States Congress to revise
14 Department of Homeland Security funding formulas for Targeted
15 Infrastructure Capability grants to emphasize threat assessment
16 for strategically located border communities, rather than
17 population; and, be it further

18 RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward official
19 copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, to
20 the president of the Senate and the speaker of the House of
21 Representatives of the United States Congress, to the secretary of
22 the Department of Homeland Security, and to all the members of the
23 Texas delegation to Congress with the request that this resolution
24 be officially entered in the Congressional Record as a memorial to
25 the Congress of the United States of America.