

By: Guillen

H.R. No. 479

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, For the past eight years, the Community Historical  
2 Archaeology Project with Schools program of The University of Texas  
3 Rio Grande Valley has worked to raise awareness of the region's rich  
4 cultural and natural history; and

5           WHEREAS, Established in 2009, CHAPS brings scholars from  
6 UTRGV into partnership with area schools and other community  
7 institutions in order to create archaeologically and historically  
8 literate citizens; these experts work with area schools to train  
9 students from kindergarten through high school in the stewardship  
10 of historical sites and vital natural resources while preparing  
11 them for continuing studies in science, technology, engineering,  
12 and mathematics; and

13           WHEREAS, Contributors to CHAPS include faculty from the  
14 university's anthropology, history, geology, communication,  
15 education, and biology departments, faculty and students from the  
16 Robert C. Vackar College of Business and Entrepreneurship and The  
17 Studio, and staff from the Border Studies Archive and the Special  
18 Collections Library; and

19           WHEREAS, The project has also forged relationships with such  
20 local and county institutions as the Brownsville Historical  
21 Association, the Cameron County Historical Commission, the Hidalgo  
22 County Historical Commission, the Roma Historical Commission, the  
23 King Ranch Museum, the Museum of South Texas History, the Peñitas  
24 Historical Society, the Port Isabel Museum, the Starr County

1 Historical Museum, the Webb County Heritage Foundation, and the  
2 Zapata County Museum of History, as well as such state entities as  
3 Texas Tropical Trails and the Texas Historical Commission and such  
4 federal agencies as the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and  
5 Wildlife Service, and the International Boundary and Water  
6 Commission; this outstanding program has benefited from the  
7 leadership of its director, Dr. Russell K. Skowronek, and from the  
8 expertise and hard work of Roseann Bacha-Garza, Christopher Miller,  
9 Juan L. Gonzalez, Kenneth R. Summy, Nick Taylor, Rolando Avila,  
10 Bobbie Lovett, John Milford, and Margaret Dorsey; and

11 WHEREAS, The program's successful efforts have included  
12 student-led research into the Valley's prehistoric peoples and  
13 early pioneers, a project to interview World War II veterans, and  
14 the creation of lesson plans on the history of the Rio Grande  
15 Valley; one of the most recent initiatives has been the development  
16 of the Rio Grande Valley Civil War Trail, which includes highway and  
17 street signs marking Civil War sites across six counties, from  
18 Laredo to Brownsville; the project has also created a bilingual  
19 map, guide, and brochure, as well as a website and a series of  
20 podcasts, that identify the sites and explain their significance;  
21 and

22 WHEREAS, In 2016, CHAPS received two awards from the Texas  
23 Historical Commission: an Award of Merit for preserving the  
24 cultural and historical resources of Texas and the Chairman's Award  
25 for Community Education for the Rio Grande Valley Civil War  
26 Project; in 2017, the program earned the prestigious Daniel G.  
27 Roberts Award for Excellence in Public Historical Archaeology from

1 the Society for Historical Archaeology; and

2 WHEREAS, CHAPS has proven to be a dynamic and innovative  
3 educational endeavor, one that is enlightening and inspiring  
4 countless young people throughout the Rio Grande Valley; now,  
5 therefore, be it

6 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 85th Texas  
7 Legislature hereby commend the Community Historical Archaeology  
8 Project with Schools for its visionary approach to education and  
9 extend sincere best wishes to all those associated with the program  
10 for continued success in their important work; and, be it further

11 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
12 prepared for CHAPS as an expression of high regard by the Texas  
13 House of Representatives.