

By: Fallon

H.R. No. 781

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Former NFL placekicker Rolf Benirschke built a
2 legacy of achievement in his years as a player, and he has further
3 distinguished himself through his courageous efforts to overcome
4 serious health issues and to work in behalf of others who face
5 similar challenges; and

6 WHEREAS, A native of Boston, Mr. Benirschke played football
7 at the University of California, Davis, before being selected in
8 the 12th round of the 1977 NFL Draft; he made his professional debut
9 for the San Diego Chargers later that year, and he went on to spend
10 his entire decade-long career with that franchise; during his
11 tenure, he tallied an impressive total of 328 extra points and 146
12 field goals and earned All-Pro and Pro Bowl honors; and

13 WHEREAS, Mr. Benirschke's accomplishments are all the more
14 impressive given that he was diagnosed with ulcerative colitis in
15 his second NFL season; he overcame that life-threatening ailment to
16 once again excel on the gridiron, and his comeback was recognized
17 with numerous awards; he later battled hepatitis C, having
18 contracted the virus from a blood transfusion, and he underwent
19 extensive treatment to ultimately be cured of that potentially
20 deadly disease; and

21 WHEREAS, Motivated by his personal experiences,
22 Mr. Benirschke has spent more than three and a half decades
23 supporting patients who live with Crohn's disease, ulcerative
24 colitis, colorectal and bladder cancer, and other circumstances

1 that can lead to ostomy surgery; he has served as a national
2 spokesperson for the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of America, which
3 presented him with a Modell Award for Business Leadership, and has
4 raised over \$1 million to find a cure for inflammatory bowel
5 disease; and

6 WHEREAS, Mr. Benirschke has also collaborated with the
7 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Liver
8 Foundation, and other organizations that raise awareness of
9 hepatitis C; moreover, he created the Rolf Benirschke Legacy
10 Foundation and the patient support program Kick Hep C, and he
11 cofounded Legacy Health Strategies; an accomplished author as well,
12 he has written three books, *Alive & Kicking*, *Great Comebacks from*
13 *Ostomy Surgery*, and *Embracing Life*; and

14 WHEREAS, Rolf Benirschke is not only an inspiration to
15 football fans nationwide but also to patients and their families
16 across the globe, and he is indeed deserving of special recognition
17 for his many good works; now, therefore, be it

18 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 85th Texas
19 Legislature hereby honor Rolf Benirschke on his success as an
20 athlete and as a health advocate and philanthropist and extend to
21 him sincere best wishes for the future; and, be it further

22 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
23 prepared for Mr. Benirschke as an expression of high regard by the
24 Texas House of Representatives.