

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 122

WHEREAS, A distinguished delegation from South Texas is visiting Austin on February 7, 2017, 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, with more than 800,000 trucks, 11.5 million cars, and 5.8 million pedestrians crossing Rio Grande Valley ports of entry and averaging more than \$1.3 billion in goods and services per day; the Rio Grande Valley is an economic powerhouse for the State of Texas; and

WHEREAS, The Valley has over 1.5 million residents, and local and state officials have focused on the need to expand access to higher education, strengthen the workforce, and introduce programs, such as SpaceX, which partnered with The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley to create STARGATE and enables students to be involved in all aspects of space missions; The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Medical School enrolled its first class of 55 medical students in July of 2016; and

WHEREAS, The Texas A&M University System officially broke ground to expand in McAllen with a campus that will be linked to the campus in College Station and will offer programs in engineering, technology, biomedical sciences, agriculture, and the laboratory sciences; and

WHEREAS, The focus for today's special legislative event is workforce development, transportation and border infrastructure, The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Medical School funding, the Texas A&M University's Healthy South Texas initiative, and the Rio Grande Valley border image; major sponsors include The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Texas A&M University, South Texas College, The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Foundation, the City of McAllen, the City of Edinburg, the City of Weslaco, the Port of Brownsville, the Rio Grande Valley Partnership, the McAllen Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Edinburg Chamber of Commerce, the Weslaco Chamber of Commerce, the McAllen Chamber of Commerce, the Brownsville Community Improvement Corporation, the Edinburg Economic Development Corporation, the Mission Economic Development Corporation, the McAllen Economic Development Corporation, the Edinburg Economic Development Corporation, the Pharr Economic Development Corporation, the Rio South Texas Economic Council, the McAllen-Hidalgo International Bridge, the Anzalduas International Bridge, and the Food Bank of

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the Rio Grande Valley; several private sector businesses, such as the Warren Group Architects, BBVA Compass Bank, and IBC 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

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 85th Legislature, hereby recognize February 7, 2017, 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, Zaffirini

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on February 7, 2017.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate

Member, Texas Senate

Member, Texas Senate