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By:  Reynolds H.R. No. 217

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, The Convict Leasing and Labor Project is dedicated to documenting past and present instances of forced labor; and

WHEREAS, Forced labor has a long and shameful history in our country, and CLLP works to educate the public about earlier abuses under slavery and convict leasing; the group also studies current forced-labor arrangements in U.S. prisons and aims to abolish these last vestiges of involuntary servitude in order to bring the United States into compliance with Article 4 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; and

WHEREAS, In Fort Bend County, CLLP has been active in addressing the legacy of the convict leasing system, which replaced slavery as a means of exploitation and repression; CLLP activist and historian Reginald Moore played a key role in the discovery of the skeletal remains of 95 African Americans, identified as victims of convict leasing, who were interred in unmarked graves on a property owned by the Fort Bend Independent School District in Sugar Land; and

WHEREAS, CLLP is working with the school district and the City of Sugar Land to develop an appropriate memorial for these victims of convict leasing; in addition, the group is seeking to establish a permanent museum of slavery and convict leasing; it also networks with prison reform activists and organizations striving to end the contemporary practice of forced labor in prisons across the country; and

WHEREAS, Through its tireless efforts, the Convict Leasing and Labor Project is helping to uncover a chapter of our state's history that has been too long ignored or forgotten, and the group's advocacy brings to light the tragic ways in which that bitter heritage continues to resonate; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 86th Texas Legislature hereby honor the Convict Leasing and Labor Project for its exceptional contributions and extend to its members sincere best wishes for continued success in their endeavors; and, be it further

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