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By:  Nevárez H.R. No. 288

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, Proud residents of Presidio County are visiting Austin to celebrate Presidio County Day at the State Capitol; and

WHEREAS, Steeped in history and possessed of a frontier mystique, the region features desert terrain that varies from rolling plains to canyons and volcanic cliffs, rises to some of the state's tallest mountain ranges, and features its highest waterfall, Capote Falls, with a drop of 175 feet; and

WHEREAS, Presidio County was established from parts of the Bexar Land District on January 3, 1850, and organized a quarter-century later; initially the largest county in the United States at 12,000 square miles, it eventually relinquished land and now holds the claim of fourth-largest county in the state at nearly 3,860 square miles; its original county seat was Fort Davis, which became part of Jeff Davis County, and the Presidio County government relocated to Marfa two years after the town's founding in 1883; and

WHEREAS, From the 1880s to the 1940s, silver mining was a leading industry after a silver deposit was found in the Chinati Mountains by local rancher and trader John W. Spencer; his discovery led to the opening of Presidio Mine, which would produce more than 32.6 million ounces of silver over the course of its existence; and

WHEREAS, Today, the local economy is based primarily on agriculture; loamy soil provides fertile ground for growing tomatoes, melons, onions, grain, and cotton, while ranchers have traditionally raised sheep and cattle, including the famed Highland Hereford, wherever there is adequate pastureland; although no permanent streams exist in the county, the completion of Elephant Butte Dam across the Rio Grande in 1910 created a reliable supply of irrigation water, greatly increasing farming production; and

WHEREAS, Presidio is the county's largest town and home to the Fort Leaton historic site, a public museum containing ruins, exhibits, and nature trails; the county seat of Marfa boasts historical attractions as well as an active local arts scene, including the world-renowned Chinati Foundation; the town has become a popular tourist draw for its vintage charm and art and for the mysterious Marfa Lights, an atmospheric phenomenon first observed in the night sky in 1883; and

WHEREAS, With its friendly people, majestic scenery, and sundry intangible qualities, Presidio County is truly a treasure of the Lone Star State, and it is indeed a pleasure to celebrate the heritage and contributions of this storied region; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 86th Texas Legislature hereby recognize Presidio County Day at the State Capitol and extend to the visiting delegation sincere best wishes for an informative and enjoyable stay in Austin.