

By: González of El Paso

H.R. No. 1945

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Rio Vista Farm in Socorro played a central role in an  
2 often neglected chapter in our nation's history; and

3 WHEREAS, Established in 1915 as the El Paso Poor Farm, the  
4 site offered shelter to increasing numbers of people, including  
5 many neglected children; it hosted a variety of public welfare  
6 programs during the Great Depression and provided a temporary base  
7 for the Civilian Conservation Corps; from 1951 to 1964, it served as  
8 a reception and processing center for the Bracero Program, a  
9 massive guest-worker initiative first launched by the  
10 U.S. government to remedy farm labor shortages during World War II;  
11 and

12 WHEREAS, More than 80,000 braceros, or manual laborers,  
13 passed through Rio Vista Farm annually; they were subjected to  
14 humiliating medical and psychological examinations, as well as  
15 fumigation with DDT, before being bused to jobs across the country;  
16 after fulfilling their contracts, often in harsh circumstances,  
17 many of the workers were repatriated; others became U.S. citizens,  
18 and their descendants today number in the millions; and

19 WHEREAS, In another aspect of its history, Rio Vista Farm  
20 provided job opportunities for many people born in the United  
21 States; citizens were employed in processing the legal  
22 documentation required of braceros, as well as in transportation,  
23 health care, and other areas; and

24 WHEREAS, From the early 1980s until the mid-1990s, part of

1 Rio Vista Farm was used by the El Paso County Sheriff's Office for a  
2 training academy; eventually a few buildings were repurposed for  
3 use as city administrative offices and as the Rio Vista Community  
4 Center; the site was designated as a National Treasure by the  
5 National Trust for Historic Preservation in 2016, but most of the  
6 adobe structures are still in dire need of restoration; and

7 WHEREAS, Rio Vista Farm provides a window into a vital part of  
8 the American experience, and its preservation will allow future  
9 generations to more fully appreciate the intrepid spirit of our  
10 forebears and the contributions made by the braceros who helped  
11 this country during wartime and worked to secure a brighter future;  
12 now, therefore, be it

13 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 86th Texas  
14 Legislature hereby recognize the historic significance of Rio Vista  
15 Farm in Socorro and commend all those involved in the effort to  
16 maintain this site and raise awareness of its importance.