

By: Fierro

H.R. No. 2013

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, The soldiers of Company E of the Texas National  
2 Guard exhibited great courage during World War II, and they are  
3 truly deserving of special recognition; and

4           WHEREAS, In November 1940, the federal government mobilized  
5 the Texas National Guard, and Company E was activated as part of the  
6 2nd Battalion, 141st Infantry Regiment, 36th Infantry Division; in  
7 an era of segregation, Company E was the only unit in the guard to be  
8 made up entirely of Mexican American soldiers, though led by white  
9 officers; 84 of the more than 150 men in the company came from El  
10 Paso; and

11           WHEREAS, America entered the war in December 1941, and in  
12 September 1943, Company E and the 36th Division were among the first  
13 Allied soldiers to fight in Europe, when they came ashore on the  
14 beaches of Salerno, Italy; Company E took part in some of the  
15 fiercest fighting along the Italian peninsula, at the battles at  
16 San Pietro, Naples, and Anzio, and in January 1944, they arrived at  
17 the banks of the Rapido River near Monte Cassino; and

18           WHEREAS, A reconnaissance team from Company E discovered that  
19 the Germans on the far side of the river were heavily fortified, and  
20 the men of the company then took part in a brutal battle on the night  
21 of January 20; risking drowning and hypothermia as they entered the  
22 swift, freezing waters of the river, they were driven back on their  
23 first attempt; courageously, they reentered the water, and a few  
24 men broke through the enemy's barbed wire, allowing the Allied

1 forces to continue their march toward Rome; and

2 WHEREAS, Company E continued to fight bravely through  
3 northern Italy and into France and Austria at great personal cost,  
4 and only a handful of the company's members returned to El Paso at  
5 the end of the war; as one veteran said about the battle at the  
6 Rapido River, "If you did not die, or get wounded, or get captured,  
7 you were not there"; and

8 WHEREAS, At a time when Mexican Americans were often  
9 discriminated against at home, the proud men of Company E answered  
10 their nation's call to arms; many of them gave their lives, and the  
11 legacy of their valor and devotion to duty will continue to inspire  
12 generations of Texans; now, therefore, be it

13 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 86th Texas  
14 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the soldiers of Company E of the  
15 Texas National Guard for their courage and sacrifice during World  
16 War II; and, be it further

17 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
18 prepared for the people of El Paso as an expression of high regard  
19 for the men of Company E by the Texas House of Representatives.