

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 479

WHEREAS, *BlackKlansman*, an award-winning movie that most recently was honored with an Oscar, tells the story of an investigation into the Ku Klux Klan that was conducted by Ron Stallworth, a black police officer who was born and raised in El Paso, Texas; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Stallworth was hired as a police cadet in Colorado Springs and eventually promoted to police officer, and he became the first black detective in the history of the Colorado Springs Police Department; and

WHEREAS, In 1979, he responded to a classified advertisement recruiting Klan members, and when he was asked to join the cause, his department agreed to begin an undercover investigation into Klan activities, during the course of which he established a relationship with national Klan leader David Duke; and

WHEREAS, The investigation, conducted over the phone by Mr. Stallworth and in person by a white detective posing as him, resulted in a curtailment of local Klan activities, such as cross-burnings; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Stallworth left Colorado Springs in 1980, and he was subsequently employed in law enforcement agencies in Arizona and Wyoming, and in Utah, where he worked at the Department of Public Safety on gang issues; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Stallworth moved back to El Paso after retiring, and in 2013, he wrote the book *Black Klansman*, which was informed in part by his conviction that while our country had made much progress in eradicating the influence of racism, there is still much work to be done; and

WHEREAS, Growing up in El Paso, Mr. Stallworth was part of a small but proud black community with a strong history of civil rights advocacy; El Paso and its citizens have for many years played a leading role in the dismantling of widespread practices of segregation, from the lawsuits that led to the ending of all-white primary elections to the desegregation of schools, colleges, public accommodations, and sports teams; and

WHEREAS, Despite these achievements, many people in El Paso still remember segregated public accommodations and a struggle for voting rights and for representation of Hispanics in elected and economic leadership positions; and

WHEREAS, *BlackKlansman* is both an exceptional movie and a stirring reminder that our society must never stop progressing toward greater equality and understanding; Ron Stallworth exemplifies his El Paso roots and with his book and the film has told a compelling story of significant import; now, therefore, be it

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RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 86th Legislature, hereby commend Ron Stallworth for his efforts to advance the progress of and the conversation around civil rights and racial equality in our society and extend to him congratulations on the success of his book *Black Klansman* and its adaptation as a movie and on the widespread impact of its message.

Rodríguez

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the
above Resolution was adopted by
the Senate on March 26, 2019.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate