By: Zaffirini   S.R. No. 52

SENATE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The Texas-Mexico border spans 14 counties in the State of Texas, and approximately 10 percent of the state's population resides in a Texas-Mexico border county; and

WHEREAS, Millions of people rely on crossing the border to access education, health care, retail, and other service industry necessities, and these activities have a positive effect on the economic stability of the region; the border generated more than $350 billion in annual gross domestic product as of 2019, and trade within the region represents more than 5 percent of Texas' gross domestic product; and

WHEREAS, In 2018, trade through the El Paso port of entry affected approximately 165,000 net jobs in Texas and $25 billion in gross domestic product; moreover, Port Laredo is the largest inland trade port along the border, ranking third in the nation for total trade in May 2021; across the United States, the Pharr-Reynosa International Bridge is the second largest produce-crossing land port, ensuring the efficient delivery of fresh fruits and vegetables to all Americans; and

WHEREAS, The Texas-Mexico border is a vibrant, thriving, multicultural region that contributes to the richness and diversity of our state and country; the majority of area residents are Americans of at least partial Mexican descent, and the tri-national region includes tribal nations such as the

Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas and Ysleta del Sur Pueblo of El Paso; and

WHEREAS, Border communities have long been recognized for their steadfast commitment to safety; countless generations of Texans have chosen to rear their families along the Texas-Mexico border due to its peaceful community, and some of the safest cities in the country include Brownsville, Eagle Pass, Del Rio, Laredo, McAllen, and El Paso, which is known for Fort Bliss and its significant military presence; and

WHEREAS, Multiple cities along the border have been honored with the All-American City award; El Paso has won the award four times, and Edinburg has won three times; other recipients of this prestigious designation include McAllen, Mission, Hidalgo, Pharr, and Weslaco; and

WHEREAS, The Texas-Mexico border features an ecologically diverse environment; the region's natural sites include the Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley State Park, Quinta Mazatlán, the Butterfly Center, and Big Bend National Park, which attracts numerous species of birds, plants, butterflies, bats, reptiles, and ants; in addition, one of the state's symbols, the Texas red grapefruit, is grown in the Rio Grande Valley; and

WHEREAS, Countless Texans benefit from the border region's premier educational institutions, which include four-year universities, junior colleges, and trade schools; more than 28,600 students are enrolled in The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, and the UTRGV School of Medicine currently serves hundreds of medical students, medical residents, and fellows who

participate in hospital-based training programs; in Laredo, Texas A&M International University and Laredo College are designated Hispanic-Serving Institutions; and

WHEREAS, The Texas-Mexico border region is playing a vital role in the story of the Lone Star State, and it is indeed deserving of special recognition; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the 87th Texas Legislature, 1st Called Session, hereby recognize that the Texas-Mexico border is vital to the economy, education, and character of our state, and that the cities and counties along the Texas-Mexico border are vibrant, prosperous, diverse, and safe communities.