87R14230 JGH-D

By:  Morales of Maverick H.R. No. 298

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, Bertha Venegas of the National Resources Conservation Service is the 2020 recipient of the agency's National Individual Civil Rights Award; and

WHEREAS, Originally known as the Soil Conservation Service, the NRCS is a program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture that provides farmers and ranchers with assistance in making conservation improvements to their land; the National Individual Civil Rights Award recognizes a person who has made a significant contribution to the agency's civil rights program; and

WHEREAS, Growing up on a cattle ranch in Eagle Pass, Bertha Venegas raised show lambs and won college scholarships from the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo; after earning her bachelor's degree in agriculture at Southwest Texas State University, she joined the SCS in 1988 and began her career as a technician in her hometown; she was promoted to district conservationist in Johnson City, and in 1997, she became an NRCS resource conservation and development coordinator in San Antonio; appointed as a state outreach specialist in 2011, she now works out of the field office in Boerne; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Venegas has served as acting national Hispanic Emphasis Program manager, and she focuses her efforts on historically underserved farmers and ranchers; in 2018, she established the Texas Urban and Rural Conservation Project and Project G.R.E.E.N. (Growing Roots for Education, Environment, and Nutrition), a grant program directed at schools; in 2020, she oversaw the distribution of more than $175,000 through TURCP and $112,000 through Project G.R.E.E.N.; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Venegas has won the National Individual Civil Rights Award once before, in 1997, and she has also been recognized as Outstanding RC&D Coordinator for the Southwest Region of RC&D Councils and received Visionary and Leadership Awards from the National Organization of Professional Hispanic NRCS Employees, as well as a Service Award from the Latinos in Agriculture organization; in addition to her post in Boerne, she is also Farm Production and Conservation beginning farmer and rancher coordinator for Texas, advisor to the Texas Civil Rights Advisory Committee, and the Texas limited English proficiency coordinator; and

WHEREAS, Bertha Venegas's dedication, expertise, and commitment to civil rights outreach have greatly benefited the farmers and ranchers of the Lone Star State, and she may indeed take great pride in this prestigious recognition of her many achievements; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 87th Texas Legislature hereby congratulate Bertha Venegas on her receipt of the National Individual Civil Rights Award and extend to her sincere best wishes for continued success in her important work; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be prepared for Ms. Venegas as an expression of high regard by the Texas House of Representatives.