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By:  Fierro H.R. No. 887

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, The Books Are GEMS nonprofit bookstore has provided an invaluable service to the young readers of El Paso during the COVID-19 pandemic, and it is truly deserving of special recognition; and

WHEREAS, Established to inspire children through reading and to empower families through literacy, Books Are GEMS offers free books to youth in El Paso County, southern New Mexico, and at Fort Bliss; in addition to its store on North Loop Drive, it also works with school districts, community groups, and local partners such as the Lion's Club and the El Pasto Rotary Club to furnish books to children and families who are not able to reach its El Paso location; and

WHEREAS, During the COVID-19 crisis, the bookstore launched its "Grab a Bag of Books" program, with each child in a family receiving a bag containing one new book and several gently used volumes sorted by grade level and gender; since the start of the pandemic, more than 5,000 families have visited the store, and from July 2020 to March 2021, over 20,000 free books were distributed to area youth; and

WHEREAS, By fostering a love of reading and learning, Books Are GEMS is opening a world of opportunity to a new generation of readers, and its extra efforts over the past year have provided both entertainment and enlightenment to countless young people during a difficult time; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 87th Texas Legislature hereby commend Books Are GEMS for its contributions during the COVID-19 pandemic and extend to all those associated with the nonprofit sincere best wishes for continued success; and, be it further

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