WHEREAS, The COVID-19 pandemic has imposed significant and unprecedented challenges on teachers, students, and school staff in El Paso, requiring them to adjust and adapt to new changes, methods, and policies during a prolonged public health crisis; and

WHEREAS, On March 13, 2020, Governor Greg Abbott declared a state of disaster in Texas due to the spread of the novel coronavirus; although El Paso schools and school districts took immediate action to protect the safety of students and faculty, the protracted nature of the crisis has exposed the limitations of remote learning, especially for students who do not have ready access to the technology necessary to take advantage of it; and

WHEREAS, El Paso teachers have demonstrated tremendous dedication to educating youth in these extraordinary circumstances, and they have shown a great deal of passion, creativity, and patience in accommodating the needs of all of their students in a virtual learning environment; at times, they have assumed considerable personal risk in returning to their classrooms for in-person instruction, especially as educators have only recently been added to the priority list for COVID-19 vaccinations; and

WHEREAS, Students' lives have also been deeply impacted by the pandemic, social distancing, and safety protocols; due to the "digital divide" and the prevalence of full-time virtual learning, some students have fallen behind their peers academically, while
many others have experienced stress, anxiety, and loneliness as a result of being away from their classrooms, friends, and extracurricular activities; and

WHEREAS, The students, teachers, and school employees of El Paso deserve recognition for their resilience in coping with a pandemic that has disrupted public education in profound ways, and this uncertain time in our history has only highlighted the vast importance of our educators and the work that they do to ensure that all young Texans have the opportunity to succeed; now, therefore,

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 87th Texas Legislature hereby honor El Paso teachers, students, and school staff for their hard work to overcome the difficulties of teaching and learning during the COVID-19 pandemic and extend to them sincere best wishes for the future.