



83R2508 BK-D

By: Alonzo

H.R. No. 64

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, June 15, 2014, will mark 26 years since the passing of William C. Velasquez, founder of the Southwest Voter a fitting opportunity to pay tribute to the achievements of this voting rights pioneer and revered son of the Lone Star State; and

WHEREAS, Born in 1944, Willie Velasquez graduated from Central Catholic High School in San Antonio and then attended St. Mary's University; his dedication to furthering the civil rights of

Hispanic Americans was already evident in his college years; he helped found the Mexican American Youth Organization while at St. Mary's and also worked as an organizer for the United Farm Workers

WHEREAS, Prominent in a number of groundbreaking Latino political organizations of the late 1960s and early 1970s, Mr. Velasquez helped lay the groundwork for the Raza Unida Party, a political party championing the rights of Mexican Americans, and for the National Council of La Raza, which has become an important civil rights and advocacy group; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Velasquez focused on Latino participation in thousands of nonpartisan voter registration and get-out-the-vote campaigns, SVREP has helped bring about a dramatic increase in Latino voters, and the number of registered Hispanics has risen from 2.4 million in the year the organization was founded to 14.3 million.

WHEREAS, Willie Velasquez also realized the need for an organization that could gauge Hispanic public opinion and share public policy issues that impact Latino citizens, thereby amplifying their voice in the dialog of American politics; and

WHEREAS, The untimely death of Mr. Velasquez in 1988 at the age of 44 was a loss deeply felt throughout the country, but his legacy lives on; in 1995, President Bill Clinton posthumously

civilian honor, and he was one of the civil rights figures whose names were attached to the U.S. Senate version of the Voting Rights Act Reauthorization and Amendments Act of 2006; and

WHEREAS, Willie Velasquez is a figure of great importance for United States about a range of civic issues were a great and influential contribution that continues to benefit the State of Texas and the other states of the Union; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 83rd Texas Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life of William C. Velasquez