

RESOLUTION _____

THE COUNTY OF ZAPATA OPPOSING THE DECLARATION OF A NATIONAL EMERGENCY ON THE SOUTHERN BORDER

WHEREAS, President Donald J. Trump issued a declaration “that a national emergency exists at the southern border of the United States” on February 15, 2019 (the “Declaration”);

WHEREAS, the Rio Grande constitutes the southern border between the State of Texas and the Republic of Mexico;

WHEREAS, the County of Zapata lies alongside the Rio Grande which defines the southern border of the United States and the northern border of the Republic of Mexico;

WHEREAS, the Declaration would result in the construction of an imposing physical barrier not only in the County of Zapata but throughout the Texas-Mexico border that would further endanger the Rio Grande which is the primary water source for urban and agricultural use for more than six million people, affecting at least two million acres of land pursuant to studies conducted by the U. S. International Boundary and Water Commission and preserves the property rights of adjoining landowners which have existed for over 300 years;

WHEREAS, the Rio Grande is a major amenity for the entire Texas-Mexico border and its history of cultural relationship between Texas and Mexico must be preserved;

WHEREAS, specifically, the Rio Grande has been the lifeblood of the County of Zapata since its founding in 1858;

WHEREAS, the geography of the Rio Grande encompasses the historic origins of this part of the United States of America, including ranchlands deeded from the King of Spain to (now) American landholders through land grants dating back over 10 generations;

WHEREAS, the proposed border wall would effectively destroy countless irreplaceable historic buildings, districts, and landmarks;

WHEREAS, the United States Government should provide for an effective and an economically positive solution in order to protect the Texas-Mexico border’s most important asset: the Rio Grande River;

WHEREAS, the Rio Grande is of tremendous historical importance to Texas and to our good neighbor, Mexico which is Texas’ number one trading partner;

WHEREAS, the United States Government should support a border security plan that is less costly and less invasive to U.S. landowners, and includes greater investment in technology

and/or additional personnel along the Texas-Mexico border, and that continues to foster economic development policies with our good neighbor that have been in place for generations;

WHEREAS, U.S. trade with Mexico exceeded \$611 billion through December 2018;

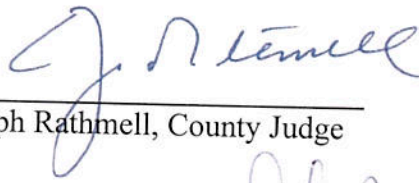
WHEREAS, the Port of Laredo accounted for 37.4% (\$228.77 Billion) of the total value of U.S.-Mexico trade making Laredo the No. 1 In-land Trade Port of Entry;

WHEREAS, it is the opinion of this governing body that an emergency does not exist on the southern border of the United States including the Texas-Mexico border in any form, nature, appearance or description for the following reasons:

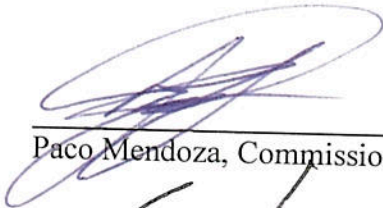
- historical data on illegal alien apprehensions clearly indicate that there is no urgent, or even impending, security crisis for the County of Zapata or along the Texas-Mexico Border.
- historical data from 1960 to 2017 released by the Laredo sector of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (“CBP”) at a February 1, 2019 State of the Border presentation shows that the total illegal alien apprehensions by the U. S. Border Patrol along the southwest border for 2017 (303,916) are at a 45-year low, comparable to numbers recorded in the early 1970’s;
- CBP data presented at the aforementioned State of the Border presentation also reflects that 2018 data (396,579) of illegal alien apprehensions by the U. S. Border Patrol along the southwest border reached only one-fourth of the agency’s historical peak in 2000;
- the southwest border as defined by CBP includes the border from San Diego, California to the Rio Grande Valley of Texas; the Laredo sector includes the counties of Webb and Zapata;
- CBP data presented at the aforementioned State of the Border presentation shows that of the 303,916 illegal alien apprehensions from 2017 by the U. S. Border Patrol along the southwest border, the Laredo Sector apprehended 25,460 illegal aliens compared to the 143,685 illegal alien apprehensions in 1986;
- the aforementioned apprehensions include a substantial number of individuals and families including children who surrender to CBP for the purpose of applying for asylum;
- additional CBP data shared at the aforementioned State of the Border presentation indicates that more than 90 percent of illegal drug seizures are occurring at legal ports of entry;
- the 2018 DEA National Drug-Threat Assessment published by the U. S. Department of Justice Drug Enforcement Administration identifies that since 2016, controlled prescription drugs (CPDs), which are easily obtained from pharmacies and other legal sources, are the number one cause of overdose deaths in the United States;
- the present population of Zapata County is approximately 14,500 making this County one of the safest counties in the United States;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMISSIONERS COURT OF THE COUNTY OF ZAPATA THAT based on the foregoing, the Commissioners Court of the County of Zapata, Texas disapproves and opposes the Declaration in that no such emergency exists between the Texas-Mexico border in general and specifically between the County of Zapata and the Republic of Mexico and creates a false and grossly distorted image of this community as a dangerous and unsafe place to live and work.

PASSED BY THE ZAPATA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT ON THIS THE 25TH DAY OF MARCH, 2019.



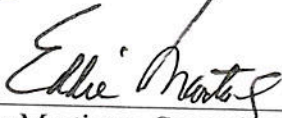
Joseph Rathmell, County Judge



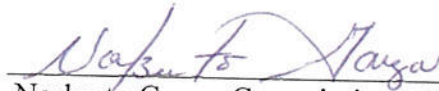
Paco Mendoza, Commissioner Pct. 1



Olga Elizondo, Commissioner Pct. 2

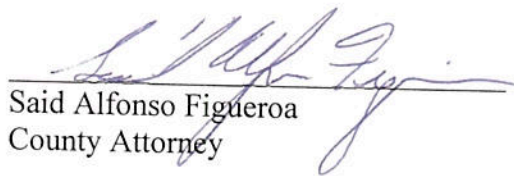


Eddie Martinez, Commissioner Pct. 3



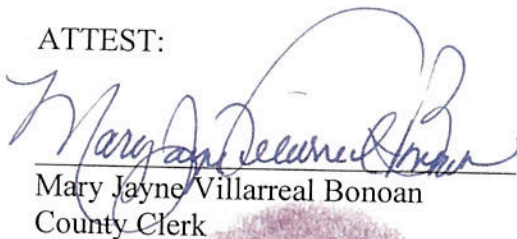
Norberto Garza, Commissioner Pct. 4

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Said Alfonso Figueroa
County Attorney

ATTEST:



Mary Jayne Villarreal Bonoan
County Clerk

