

# HOUSE JOURNAL

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SEVENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE, REGULAR SESSION

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## SUPPLEMENT

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SIXTY-SIXTH DAY — WEDNESDAY, MAY 11, 2005

### MEMORIAL SESSION HONORING REPRESENTATIVE JOE E. MORENO

In accordance with **HR 1569**, a memorial session of the house of representatives was held in the house chamber at 9 a.m. for the purpose of honoring the life of the Honorable Joe E. Moreno.

Representative Gallego opened the memorial service, speaking as follows:

Bienvenidos a nuestra celebracion de la vida de nuestro amigo, nuestra colega, el Representante Joe Moreno. Welcome to our celebration of the life of our colleague and our friend, Representative Joe Moreno.

It is my privilege to welcome Bishop Gregory Aymonds of the Diocese of Austin for an opening prayer and remarks.

The invocation was offered by Bishop Aymonds, as follows:

Thank you very much. We come together today to remember and to thank God for the life of a great man, Joe, who certainly knew the Lord in this life. He served him through his family, through his church, and through government. And we are here to give thanks for all that he was and all that he continues to be for us as we commend him into God's kingdom. He was a member of our Catholic family and we are very proud to claim him as a member of our family. And our family will be missing him, but we know that he is given to the Lord and it is that which gives us consolation and hope.

A reading from Paul's letter to the Romans: "None of us lives as his own master, and none of us dies as his own master. While we live, we are responsible to the Lord. And when we die, we die as his servants. Both in life and in death, we are the Lord's. That is why Christ died and came to life again. That he might be Lord to both the dead and the living."

Loving and faithful God, we know that Joe certainly belonged to you in this life. He was responsible to you, he loved you, and he showed that love by the love that he had for his family, for our state, for those with whom he worked in this house. Today we ask you to receive him and to give him the fullness of eternal life in your kingdom. That, just as he lived and believed in you, you will now invite him to sit at your banquet table in the kingdom that lasts forever. We pray for his mother and father, his sister, his brother, those whom Joe loved and

worked with, his extended family, and those here in the house. As we gather to remember and to honor him today, help us to imitate his good qualities, help us to live like him in faith and in great service to others. We make this prayer as always in faith for you, our God, living and reigning forever and ever.

The house and gallery rose for the posting of the colors by Texas DPS Region 6 and the DPS Color Guard.

Representative Gallego led the house in the pledge of allegiance to the United States flag.

### **ADDRESS BY SENATOR GALLEGOS**

Thank you. Good morning. I didn't get to bed until four o'clock this morning, and then I got a call at my apartment by a radio station that wanted to do an interview at four-thirty this morning. And I said, "How in the hell did they get my number?" It reminded me of Joe. He could get anything, anybody's number. And that's the way Joe was, and that's what he was like. I didn't have time—because we have the tax bill on the floor yesterday and this morning—to write down any notes, but I don't need any notes about Joe.

I think when I first met him, he had this glow on his face, and that's when he was working for Al Luna. I think Jessica said yesterday that then he had wanted to be a state representative. Well, I have been a firefighter all my life and you ask yourself, in that crossroads in life, you would never think that you would be sitting in this body in the house of representatives and, then again, much less the Texas Senate. And I think that's the way Joe looked at things and he would have never thought that there would be two "barrio boys" in the Texas House, and now me in the Texas Senate. But, what I would like to reminisce and think about Joe is, I think, when he first got elected, I knew that he took over my house seat over here for Gerard Torres, when Gerard resigned. And then we all got together to see how Joe was going to do. Since then, the rest is history. We carried legislation together. Those of you that know me, know that I usually come over from the senate, and I'll kneel between Joe and Jessica as we contemplate similar legislation together, and I've done that for quite a while. And then we'll go over and visit Rick, and now Melissa, who are all in my district. And then I'll talk to Garnet, and Sylvester, and Senfronia, and the rest that encompass my senate district in Houston.

Joe and I did a lot of things together other than going to ball games, but we did town hall meetings together, we did senior's centers together, and I liked doing that with Joe and his staff. He would always want to keep especially his seniors informed on what was going on either in session or out of session. I think those of you who were at the service yesterday—I think that Jessica summed it all up, she was great. What I like to remember about Joe, outside of the politics and the comradery and the friendship, is that I am a little bit older than Joe and he'd hang around his friends he has over here, but back in the hood, back with Gerard

and a bunch of younger types—and I call them "The Breakfast Club," that's the name that I have tagged them, "The Breakfast Club"—they were always together, and I was kind of like the old man just looking over them. Joe always had a knack—I think Jessica put this good, and I'd like to go back to when the democrats went to Ardmore and then when we went to Albuquerque—all of a sudden here comes Joe and Jessica with a bunch of tamales from my district that he and Jessica know that I like and they flew in. That was one part of it. And then I think there was another, there was a Halloween party that I was invited to and I went, and Joe was there with a date. And I looked at him and I said, "Joe is that you?" and he had this big ole gown on and with a wig and all this fake jewelry. And I said, "Joe who are you supposed to be?"

He said, "Mario, you don't know who I am? Senator, you don't know who I am?"

I said no.

He said, "I'm Little Richard." I said, "Joe, you look more like Big Richard to me."

We represent one of my alma maters, Milby High School, which won the state championship last year, and I had just won my primary race. I said that I wanted to come to Austin and see my team play. It was the coach that I had when I played varsity at Milby High School. And I had a seat way up in the second level over where they played the high school basketball championship. And I'm looking down on the floor and, right behind my coach, there sits Joe. And the coach had asked me to do a little reception for the alumni going all the way back to 1950, when we won the last state championship. And I said, "Well, coach, how many people are you going to have?" "Oh, well, we're only going to have about 80."

I said okay.

Then it was over at the trial lawyers building up on the roof. There was 400 people that went up there that Joe had invited—and it was all our folks—they had reproduced the invitation and they were passing it around when we were winning the first game. So I asked Joe, "Joe, how did you get down there on the front row?"

"Oh man, you want down on the front row?"

I said, "Yeah, that's my team."

So he had us tickets on the front row. But, even better, and I would have never thought about this, and I played ball when Milby won the state championship, he said, "Mario, you want to go out there and give him their medallions?"

I said, "Can we do that, Joe?"

He said, "Sure we can. I've already got it fixed up." I think that those are the good times and I can go on and on and on, but there are other people that need to talk about Joe, but I think that what you saw if you were at the service

yesterday, you saw an outpour of not only respect but friendship and really the kind of guy that Joe was. And I kinda knew it, but it was born out yesterday, it was unbelievable. Unbelievable. He will be sorely missed, but I think that he has left his mark not only in this body, but in Texas and in my community.

#### **ADDRESS BY REPRESENTATIVE MERRITT**

Thank you very much. I thought Mario knew Joe a lot better than that. You know that Joe didn't wear fake jewelry, did he? I'm honored to be here to talk about our friend. It is so heart warming to be here with you, and I have several things that I want to try to cram in. When I first went over to see the Morenos, Alice said, "Tommy, we want you to say something about Joe if you can do it." And I said, "I really, really don't know that I can. It has been a tough time for all of us." When she told me that, I prayed that I would have the strength to get through it, and I know that their family is of very strong faith. And I walked around the house, at Joe's mom's house—Joe was very proud of his mother and his father—when I looked around, I saw all these plaques and these certificates all about a great human being, and it was Joe's mom being teacher of the year, being teacher this, and teacher that. And of Frank, of his love of his wife and his family. Joe brought that here.

As I walked out in the front yard, I got to thinking about Joe. I said, you know what, I bet Joe played out here in this front yard, and I bet that Joe had everybody in the neighborhood coming over and playing. And that Joe would just bring them in, and that Joe had the faith. Something that I have learned that Joe and I had in common, Joe had the faith. Joe was a Christian. And Joe lived a Christian life. I accepted the Lord at an early age as well as Joe. And I have a book that I want to mention just a bit. It says Faith Takes a Name by Dwight Stevenson. It's copyrighted 1944, it's cataloged in the Library of Congress, catalog number 53-10979. In Faith Takes a Name—I've read this book many times and then I realized that Faith Takes a Name is Joe Moreno. Joe had the faith and faith takes that name.

"In the beginning, the sense of the Holy Spirit was great upon the believers. It baptized the disciples with power, multiplied their number, bound them into a vital fellowship, brought them into conflict with fellow Jews, dispersed them in persecution. The reason for the predicament lies in the fact that we inherited our Christianity from a long line of spiritual ancestors." Joe had that. Joe had it early, and Joe had it in his heart. And as I looked and read through the book this morning, there was a group that called themselves, "The Way of Life." "And in the early writing The Way of Life is first, you shall love the fruitful God who made you. Second, love your neighbor as yourself. Moreover, anything you would not have done to you you shall not do to anyone else. Choosing among the specific commands under this way of life we find these. You shall hate nobody, some you shall love more than your own soul. You shall not hold a grudge or show despicably in giving advice. Do not be a grumbler, be long

suffering and upright in your business and reverent in all the words that you hear. You shall accept the adversities that befall you as good, knowing that nothing happens without God. Do not keep stretching out your hands to receive and drawing them back when it comes to returning." These are just a few examples of Joe's life. He was a true disciple. I wish I could remember when I was first meeting Joe.

I received a letter, it dates September 20, 1998. It was from a lady that was at the Capitol with some of her students and this was the letter to me: "I expected that the flag and certificate would be presented to the people of St. Robert's Church, the parish I then served. So when it was presented to me personally, I was very much surprised and also deeply grateful. Both flags and certificates are now displayed in my mother's home side by side. That seems appropriate, my appreciation for my citizenship as a Texan, as an American and the awareness of the responsibility to participate in the democratic process that was learned in that home from my mother and late father's teachings and examples. Its presence there gives me a way to acknowledge and show my appreciation to them. May I also express my sincere appreciation for your generous gift of time and presence, the day of the opening of the Medal of Honor exhibit. That must have been a long morning for you, and it was a weekend. Your taking the time to give our five and myself a personal tour of the Capitol, including the privilege of being on the floor of both chambers, was outstanding generosity and dedication that developed a sense of citizenship for those students. It was an unforgettable experience for all of us, and I am sure it will impact them for life in a positive way. Thank you very much for that precious gift also. May the Lord continue to grant you good health and the gifts of wisdom, knowledge, counsel, and courage as you fulfill your responsibilities to him and to the people of the State of Texas and in this legislation."

I think that Joe did that as a great citizen. He served the Lord and to him we give all honor. I want to just not make this sad. I know that Jessica was a very close friend. I want to talk for the staff and everybody about Joe personally. Joe always wanted you to say, "Thank you, Joe." He always wanted you to be able to say thank you. Dan Flynn sits behind me, and Joe would always ask me, "How's Dan?" One day with Joe, and I said, "Dan you've got to vote with your buddies." And Dan said, "That's going to get you in trouble." Joe didn't worry about being in trouble if you were a buddy. He wanted you to be his buddy. We went to lunch that day, and we were riding along and Joe says, "Hey, how did you vote today? Did you vote with me?" And I said, "Yes, Joe, I did." Then he reached up on the dash, and there was the voter list. He pulled it down and he looks and he said, "Yeah, you're on the team. You're on my team."

Then I just want to tell you that just recently Jessica was back there, and you know you have to have somebody to stand with you, and Joe was the foxhole guy. You could always trust Joe in the foxhole. He loved ya. He loved Dunnam, he loved Garnet, he loved Pete. We were foxhole guys.

In the last few days, I wore a tie that Joe had presented to me, then the tie didn't look good. So, he took me out to Neiman's and I had to buy a suit and then I had to buy a scarf, and Joe said, "You know, I can't afford this stuff, but I want you to wear it." And I felt obligated about honoring Joe. He would say, "Do you like that?" And it was like, "Sure, I like it." It was a way to say, "Thank you, Joe."

You know, when he would say, "Did you vote with me today?"

"Yes, I did." Thank you, Joe.

And then, I had a tough week, and I got this tie that my daughter Missy sent me. And Missy sent me a note and it said, "We thought you could use a crazy tie for a crazy week. We hope this week is better. We love you. We support your effort to make Texas a better state. -Janet, Missy, Allen, Meredith, and Thomas." And I went back and since Joe hadn't bought me the tie, I thought I should show Joe my tie. I said, "Joe, look at this tie. Missy sent it to me and this is the note." And he leans over and said, "Jess! Jess! Missy sent Tommy a tie and we are so proud that Missy is proud of Tommy. Jess, aren't you proud of Tommy?"

And that was Joe Moreno, he was proud of all of us. And Mr. and Mrs. Moreno, Frank, he loved you. He was a good man. And I look up in memory, Joe will always live on. As long as I live I can go on and on about the Moreno stories, and about Joe and his love for each colleague, and how he loved this body, and how we worked together.

And I will close with this, Joe wanted to know everything about your family, but he also wanted you to know everything about his family, because family was everything. And you know the Morenos as well as I do. He brought joy to all of us, but he loved Jimmy Dunnam and his family and his children. He knew their family and Mabry's family, he knew everybody's family. And that's what we will always remember. I can't say enough for him, or for you for your remembering of a fine young man and a great Texan. We will always miss him. Thank you.

#### **ADDRESS BY REPRESENTATIVE DUNNAM**

I have had many blessings in my life and I would say, except for my family, none better than knowing Joe Moreno. Except I have to qualify that because he was part of my family. He shared my kid's ball games, he would come to Waco to go to football games and softball games. And we were building a new house, and my wife and I were searching for a brand design for the home, and his family may know this, so we had decided that one day we might want to sell it, and we didn't want to have something other people can't use, so we were going to have

Jim and Michelle, and it was going to be JM ranch—"Just Mine" if someone else bought the ranch. Joe was so happy that there was going to be a JM ranch that he could use when I was out of town and take all of his friends to.

God blessed us all by giving us the opportunity to have Joe serve in the Texas House. Not just because of what he did for his constituents, but what he did being an example for each of us. I am very honored to have the Moreno family here today. Y'all that do not know the Moreno family—you do know them. You do know them, you just had to look through Joe, and see them through Joe. You know they are a God-fearing family. You know that they are a family of integrity, and that they are hard working Americans. They have a very loving home and a very generous home. A home of compassion. Someone like Joe could not have come from anywhere but that kind of a place. Their son had a zeal and zest for life that I have never experienced before. When you would go out with Joe, whether it was riding in the car, sitting on the house floor, working a bill, fighting for something that was right, or just shopping, everything was so much more exciting. Life was so much more real. If you knew Joe and you never knew his parents, you would still know that they were a guiding hand, full of love and examples of responsibility and hard work. The kind of parents that we would legislate for all of Texas children if we could just do that. You know, we are supposed to tell stories about Joe, and I don't know which ones to tell. He was so proud of his parents.

The one thing that was so odd to me, and so ironic, is Joe got all his stuff done. He got all his bills passed. Days when merit was everything, and hard work got you bills on the house floor, nobody was better at it than Joe. He did it, and that was the way he was. But Mike Wise and I would sit there and you couldn't find Joe, and he is sitting at his desk, and he is burning pencils out, and burning pens out, and he has stacks of paper this high, and you think, what in the world is Joe doing? Mike says, "Oh, his parents are in town." All day, and Joe didn't have to do that but he was so, so, so proud of that.

Over the course of our time together, we shared so many joys, many victories, and lots of defeats, and he was always steadfast in his commitment to doing what was right for the people he had represented. The people that needed a voice in Austin that didn't have a voice. He has one thing that is often missing in our ranks, courage. The courage to stand up and fight for your constituents, regardless of the political consequences, regardless of how it might affect your bills, regardless of how it might affect your committee assignments, regardless of all of that. Of all the political nonsense, he always had the courage to do what was right for his district. This hall would be a better place if we would follow his example more often, including myself.

There are a number of stories I could tell. We spent about three out of every four days in Austin together, Joe and I. He would tell parables about some mythical Uncle Benny, and I never knew if there was an Uncle Benny, but he had

the greatest stories about Uncle Benny. Me and Hopson, I remember going block-walking with Joe, and if you have never gone block-walking with Joe, it was quite an experience. Senator Gallegos talked about him on Halloween. You should have seen him in the Sean John clothes that he was so proud of wearing. You'd never seen anything like that in your entire life.

Joe was at home everywhere. I kid you not, my 25th high school reunion, I took Joe. And we went, walked in, and there was a blank name tag of somebody I knew who wasn't going to show up, and Joe grabbed the name tag, put it on, and off he went. Now, I go out and I am visiting with old friends, and I come up to Joe and he is saying something about "Vela en el techo." And I am going, "What are you doing?" And, of course, the name of the guy whose name tag he had was Greg Miller, which was this 5'2" white guy, and he had actually convinced several people that he had a growing spurt in college. And that he was telling people, I can't pronounce it—Trey can tell you—but he was telling people that he was in an off-off-broadway production of *Fiddler on the Roof* in Spanish. And if you don't believe me, pull up the *Dallas Morning News*, the photograph is coming back from Ardmore, and Joe Moreno is on the bus with the Richfield Ram's 25th anniversary T-shirt. He was quite a guy. The first time I saw him and got to know him, Mike Wise invited me, because they had an extra ticket to a Rockets game. We drove to a Rockets game, and my mind goes over that particularly when I spent three days with him last week, and the last day I wussed out on going with him to the Rockets game. God blessed me with the opportunity to talk with him one last time and he said, "Buddy, I'll see you in the morning." And I never dreamed he wouldn't be here with us today.

I wept openly for Joe on Friday, and I did this weekend. And, odd as it may sound, it felt good. It felt good to know that my life had been touched by somebody that meant that much to me. I hadn't cried since my mom died and it felt good to have loved somebody that much. We should learn from Joe, and put our constituents first, regardless of politics. We should learn to experience life's fullest everyday. To do unto others, to love our neighbor, to do for the very least of us because that is how Joe lived. I'm blessed that Joe was a part of my life. May God watch over him and bless his family.

#### **ADDRESS BY REPRESENTATIVE M. NORIEGA**

As most of you know, I am Melissa Noriega, and my husband is Representative Rick Noriega, now Lieutenant Colonel Noriega. He is in Kabul, Afghanistan, and I have had the singular honor of representing him. I was not expecting to have the need to represent him at an occasion such as this. It is my pleasure and my duty to do that. I want all of you to know that Rick's district is adjacent to Joe's district, 145 and 143 are right next door. And I was talking today to an agency head and I had said, "You need to know that I feel responsible now for not only my district, but I also feel responsible, as do Jessica and Mario, for Joe's district as well. So, our responsibilities have increased. Rick also



wanted me to share with all of you how much he has appreciated all the e-mails and expressions of condolence and all the things you sent him. He is able to get on the computer and watch sometimes, he is able to call, and he is watching now. So, Rick, wherever you are, we miss you. I have a statement I want to read from both of us:

"I am devastated by the loss of Joe Moreno. If I could find a stronger word, I would use it. I've lost a brother. The members of the house have lost a colleague. The people of Texas have lost a champion. Joe loved his family, his mom and dad, with all his big heart, and your loss is beyond my comprehension. In the Bible, to paraphrase 2nd Samuel 2-4, this is a requirement from God for those who rule with other men, you must be just and God-fearing. You're made not to be gifted with money or power but if you are just and God-fearing then you will be what God requires. Joe was both of those. I believe God sets us up. God puts us where we are meant to be. Joe was a representative of the people because he was just and God-fearing. He championed the poor. He knew when something was wrong. He spoke truth to power, and he was fearless in the face of that which he believed was wrong. He was willing to speak up in the face of opposition when he knew what was occurring was not right for Texas, for his community, for his people. He was quite a force that all of us relied upon to help with the heavy lifting. An e-mail came to me from my wife that morning. I saw the headline on the e-mail, and I opened my messenger account for her to tell me that it was not so. She told me she was on the floor of the house and that she was weeping as was friend and deskmate John Davis. I realized that I would not return to Houston to see my buddy, my friend again. I was in town in March, and before I left I gave my brother Joe a hug, not knowing it was for the last time. Sometimes it seems this is more than we can bear. It saddens me that I cannot come from where I am to say goodbye to my brother and my friend. Each of you needs to go kiss your spouse, hug your children, call your family, and be grateful you are able to do it. Do it for Joe. Life ends in an instant and none of us knows when God will call us. Whatever you are doing with your life, Melissa and I encourage you to make it count." Thank you.

#### **ADDRESS BY REPRESENTATIVE BAXTER**

Good morning. As y'all know, I sat right behind Joe on the house floor for nearly two sessions. What a lot of you may not know is that Joe and I have actually been friends for a very long time. Harkening back to the late 80s, early 90s when he and I were both aides in various positions in the house. Only with one exception, I haven't known anyone longer on the house floor than Joe. I kind of thought back to the first time I met him. You've heard some stories about the first time I met him. This was pre-renovation of the Capitol, this is before the extension. If y'all remember back then, for those of us that were here, where there are like two members now, there were like seven members in that same space. I remember he was working for John Willy back then and Ashley Smith was in that

same space. I had to take something over to Ashley Smith's office. When you walked in the door of this pretty building with a lot of people jammed in there, the first person you saw was Joe. He kind of caught me off guard because when I walked in he said, "Hi, how are you doing, who are you, and what can I do to help you?" And I said, "Well, I've got this thing I need to give to Representative Smith." He said, "Let me take you back, let me show you where it is, let me tell you who everybody is, and let me make sure you know where to go and what to do." That was Joe. He was there to help you when you needed help. I'll never forget that. I'll never forget that first time I met him.

When we were kind of young and green, we had a great friendship from that moment forward. He would say, "Let's go to lunch or let's go out somewhere after work. Let's go do something fun." One thing we tried to do pretty quickly was, as young staffers, we would try to get somebody to take us to the Austin Club. That was just the biggest thing. Those were simpler times back then. But who knows, maybe things haven't changed that much. We would do it and, quite frankly, it wasn't that often because we were very young staffers. We would sit up there and have lunch together. We'd see everybody, we'd see all the players, and all the folks that were making really good things happen for our great state. I think deep down inside we both thought that someday we could do that too. We knew that we were both capable of doing that and that we had a desire to make a difference for our community.

Of course, as the story goes, Joe entered the house in 1998, and when I was elected to the house last session, I was very happy to be able to sit behind him on the house floor. As a freshman, for me it was very comforting to have Joe in front of me. For no other reason than to know that he'd keep us all entertained. Jessica has told us that all of us back there in the corner, that we all have a job to do. We have to fill that void to the best of our ability. I know that we'll try to do that. We have had some great times on the floor. Everybody in this chamber knows that we've also had some tough times. We've had some contentious times. It is my opinion that that is when you can tell the most about someone's character and soul. Joe had a little thing that he used to say to me when it would get kind of tough back here and we'd all get kind of amped up. You know we've had a few of those moments. We'd get done and we'd adjourn and he'd look over at me and say, "Baxter, it was a tough day, but we can still break bread." I think what he was saying, and it would make me feel better, that we can disagree and we can have tough days, but we can disagree without being disagreeable. I knew that after a long day of us voting, perhaps the opposite way most of the day, that at the end of the day, when we walked off this house floor, we would be as good of friends when we walked out that door as when we walked in early that day. That meant a lot to me because we know how tough this can be. A lot of people often ask, "Do you guys really—as much as you get after each other, what's it like when you walk out the door?" I think for a lot of us, and I hope that it will continue to be

that way, that when we walk out that door, we're still friends. That was Joe to the core. He loved life. What that showed me was that he valued all of his friendships. Every one of us on this floor, he valued our friendships. As big as he was in his physical stature, he was never small, and he was never petty. I for one hope to follow his example in this chamber and in my life.

**ADDRESS BY REPRESENTATIVE MARTINEZ FISCHER**

You hear that our friend Joe was one heck of a campaigner. I'll tell you that Joe, as many of you know, was one of my best friends. He was in my wedding, we were deskmates. I heard all these things about Joe being a wonderful campaigner. I went out to help him on his election and one thing is true, Joe knew everybody. In fact, we were at some intersection in his district and he hits the breaks on his car, stops traffic, rolls down his windows, and says, "Hey, Chico, go home." And I'm like, who are you talking to? He was talking to a dog. He knew that dog and he was telling the dog to go back home. So we had this conversation about stray dogs and Joe's district in the 'hood and a good part of my district in the 'hood in San Antonio. Joe said, "Yeah, you've got to watch it around here because we have some really tough stray dogs." So we had this conversation and about an hour into our block-walking I got into the car, we were taking a water break. I said, "Joe, you don't have any mean stray dogs in this neighborhood."

He said, "Yes, I do. You saw about five of them."

I said, "No, you don't have any mean dogs. You know why I know you don't have any mean dogs in your district? Because you have too many cats. You see these dogs and cats laying up against each other in the shade. You go to my district and we don't have any cats. We just have dogs."

We really just enjoyed it, just that we always had this rivalry, this inner competition.

He taught me a few things, and I want to pass along to some of the members that if he hadn't told you this, he'd want me to tell you this. If your last name begins with the letter "M" and there is a dozen of you in the room, you have 12 and a half minutes to beat a vote verification. He used to tell us that it was 15 minutes, he said that we had 15 minutes, but I think Speaker Craddick runs that gavel a little faster than Speaker Laney. The one time I remember, we were deskmates, and it was a vote verification, so I light them up and I call him and say, "Vote verification" and he says, "I'll be there." Joe came, and people that were back there knew, he came with bed head, he smelt like a cigar. I said, "Joe, man, you smell."

He said, "Shut up, shut up."

We have our floor phones, and I reach to my floor phone to make a call and I saw his shoes. I said, "Joe." Joe Moreno was wearing house shoes on the house floor—slippers. He couldn't find his shoes. So, if your last name is an "M," you have 12 and a half minutes for vote verification, not 15, contrary to belief.

I also learned that he really took care of his staff. For those of you who participated in the services, you would have found that everywhere you looked, you had current, former staff that have all gone on to other places, all helping with the family. That was something. I think that a way to honor a good boss is to be there for him, just like they always were on the house floor. I encourage you, and he's taught me how to treat my staff. It's a page that I want to pass on to you.

I'm going to miss his moral grounding. We all have different roles here in the house. I can look at you and know that this member files 50 bills, he runs and guns, or this member, she's always at the front mic debating or at the back mic, or so-and-so is well versed in the rules. You didn't see Joe up at the mic a bunch. You didn't see Joe introducing 100 pieces of legislation, but if you were in the back rooms, if you were in the strategy sessions, Joe had that moral grounding. He always taught us, for lack of a better term, to keep it real. He always taught us to remember the human consequences of what we were doing. He always had that fire, he always had that extra log to throw on the fire to keep us going when we were out of gas. Joe provided that pep to the members and for that we knew that was his role. As sort of the team coach, as the yell leader, if you will. I'm going to miss, personally, on Wednesday nights, members, as you know, we sit down for a charitable bunko night on Wednesday night. Joe has about \$300 credit with the house and we're still going to deal him. We're going to deal him in and probably, if the past is an indication of the future, he'll have a larger credit with the house. So we'll have to settle up with the family.

I'm going to miss all of Joe's enterprising techniques. I'm going to miss the one-armed tailor that he would bring into the Capitol to measure us up for our suits and our shirts. I thought it was a joke. Since I was a freshman, they pressured me to buy some tailor-made clothes. They thought that since I was so big that I already did that. I'm an off-the-rack guy. Senior members are sitting in this other room and they're all laughing and giggling as I walk back into Joe's office. They introduce me to the tailor and he had one arm. I thought it was a gag, I said, "What are you doing? How can you make these shirts?" But that was Joe's tailor, the one-armed tailor, I used to call him. He made fine shirts. We have to make sure we bring him back.

Like I said, Joe was a part of everybody's family. I can personally attest to that. At one point in time, Joe Moreno had all of Jim Dunnam's kids thinking they were Mexican. If you don't believe me, they are in the back row. They were doing the family tree and one of his little girls said, "Mom, I thought we were Mexican."

Someone asked me how I would describe him. Mr. and Mrs. Moreno, he was just a modern day Renaissance man. He knew, whether it was fashion, whether it was technology, whether it was fancy gadgets for your car. He knew everything. He was well-traveled. He knew about good wine. He knew about philosophy. I can't describe him. We're all going to miss him, but it's hard to

forget a man like Joe Moreno. You did a wonderful job bringing him into this world and raising him. We want to thank you for sharing, for you sharing Joe with us. He's really touched all of our lives. Getting to know the family, the nephews he cared about so much. He used to say on the house floor about Joaquin, he's not here this morning, but he used to talk about the Castro twins. Joe said, "Hell, you ain't seen nothing yet. Wait until you see the Moreno twins." There are big shoes for you, nephews, to fill. We're going to miss him.

**ADDRESS BY REPRESENTATIVE THOMPSON**

Mr. and Mrs. Moreno, you did an excellent job in rearing Joe. I would like, on behalf of myself and all my colleagues, to thank you for lending us Joe. I just want to tell you some of the things that I'm going to miss about him.

I'm going to miss him arguing with the hotel clerk that I have a reservation, when I know I don't. I'm going to miss him being able to give us a ride when we are out attending the National Conference of State Legislatures, on facilities that we didn't even have reservations on. I'm going to miss eating with him over at the Trial Lawyers when he eats two steaks, a bowl of banana pudding, and ice cream. I'm going to miss him. More importantly, I'm going to miss campaigning for him when I am not given advanced notice that TV stations are going to be there, and they are going to be wanting to interview him, but instead having to interview me. I'm going to miss him for those things. I'm going to miss campaigning with him, when I walk through his district talking about the kind of person he is and why he needs to be reelected. I'm going to miss all of the secret information about people, who they don't know, but I know, that he has given me about them. More importantly, I'm going to miss being able to approve of those girlfriends that he'd always talk to me about. Every time he got a new girlfriend, he brought her by to make sure she met with my approval.

He was a great guy, as you have heard already. He had a backbone, he had courage, he had commitment, he was honest, he knew how to stick with the pack, and he knew not to give up the most vital secret of the group. He could be depended upon and not flinch when it came to sticking together, even when it was politically not the right thing on the floor for him to do. The goal in politics is not just to get elected as a politician, but it's to be a statesperson. What is good for the next generation is what he looked at. Really and truly, he was not a politician. You really brought to us a statesman. Thank you.

**ADDRESS BY REPRESENTATIVE COLEMAN**

Members and members of the Moreno family, this has been a phenomenal week. And, I think it was a week none of us wanted to go through, but those of us—as it has been said—that are from the 'hood understand very clearly what it means to grow up into and become what heroes and she-roes were, and that was so important. And, I think that that is something a lot of people don't understand about the Texas history in the barrio or the 'hood in Houston, Dallas, and other

places, that it is a little bit different. And that we build upon those leaders that we have seen. And that is one thing that Joe certainly did. That is something that I am so proud of him for, and I know that everyone else is, because he had set an example for those younger people that will come after all of us and lead this state.

That as it be, I just want Joe to know I have a DKNY suit on, so I want him to know that that is for him today, Kenneth Cole shoes, a Jane Barnes shirt, and a Ted Baker tie. Now, I say all that because I come off the elevator and we are coming to the floor, and he says, "that's a Perry Ellis shirt." And I said, "Yeah, that's right. It's a Perry Ellis shirt." The biggest regret I have is not going shopping with Joe because we would compare these notes about the latest fashion. Now, I go back to talking about the 'hood because, you see, when you don't have a lot, what you have has to be fine. And that is what Joe knew—that it had to be fine. Some people don't understand that, you see, that you have to have one of those DKNY suits, or Rodney, one of those Brioni suits, or one of those Hickey Freeman suits and some nice shoes. We call them Sunday go-to-meeting clothes. But that is a part of the culture, and how we have grown up. Because when you didn't have something that was of value, you start looking at labels. But what Joe knew is they were an extension of his love for the things that were finer. So since he loved those accoutrements, I know some people might have said yesterday, "Well, why are they at the Four Seasons?" Well, because there wasn't a Ritz Carlton. So, that is why we were at the Four Seasons. And if they had a Ritz Carlton in Austin, Texas, then we would have been there. That's how Joe would have had it. He would have made sure that everything we did was at its finest.

But the thing that is really clear, and I want everybody to know this, that in Joe's service, in everything he did in life, whether it was enjoyment, whether it was being on this house floor representing his constituents, he did it at its finest. Because of Joe, we all know that the accoutrements of life, the things that are fine are not only worth fighting for, but they are worth celebrating. That is why we celebrate Joe, because he brought out the best of us. And, one thing over the last two years in particular, I remember when I first met Jessica, Joe brought her by and we were talking. The thing Joe has been for a lot of us, and I think more than any of us know that there was a sense of glue. He really was glue that brought different people together by understanding their likes and dislikes, but also understanding that people had more in common than they had different. And so because of that, every time you think about the differences in people, think about Joe and think about what you had in common with him, and think about what you had in common with his love for Texas. Let's continue to carry out his legacy by doing the right thing on the floor of this house, and going out and buying a couple of Versace ties. Thank you.

## **HCR 185 - READ**

Representative Geren read the following previously adopted resolution:

### **HCR 185**

WHEREAS, The State of Texas has suffered an immeasurable loss with the tragic death of the Honorable Joe E. Moreno of Denver Harbor on May 6, 2005, at the age of 40; and

WHEREAS, Born in Houston on August 12, 1964, Representative Moreno graduated from St. Thomas High School and attended both the University of St. Thomas and Texas Southern University; and

WHEREAS, His competence, insight, and genuine interest in making a positive difference in the state earned him a position as a legislative aide to former State Representative Al Luna, and he went on to gain further valuable experience in the office of State Representative Jessica Farrar as her chief of staff; and

WHEREAS, Representative Moreno served as Democratic chair and election judge of Harris County Precinct No. 62 and first won election to the Texas House of Representatives in November 1998; since that time he served the residents of House District 143 with dedication and commitment during five legislative sessions, most recently contributing his knowledge and expertise to the House Committee on Border and International Affairs and the House Committee on Juvenile Justice and Family Issues; and

WHEREAS, A devoted supporter of his hometown, Representative Moreno committed himself to making his district a better place in which to live, work, and raise a family; he worked to reduce air pollution and to bolster the local economy by addressing important issues involving the Port of Houston; moreover, he worked on legislation to help protect the most vulnerable residents of the Lone Star State, making it possible for abused children to receive protection in times of need; and

WHEREAS, Held in high esteem by his peers, Representative Moreno was a former chair of the Harris County Delegation; he was further acknowledged for his contributions with a host of accolades, including the Outstanding Legislator Award from the Coalition of Texans with Disabilities, the Legislative Hero award from the Harris County Democrats, and the Houston Gulf Coast Chapter of the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement award; he also earned recognition as the 2003 Legislator of the Year from the Justice of the Peace and Constables Association; and

WHEREAS, In addition to his political involvement, this notable community leader was active in Resurrection Catholic Church, the Harris County Tejano Democrats, and LULAC Council No. 60; and

WHEREAS, Joe Moreno set an outstanding example of citizenship and service to others throughout his time on this earth, and though his friendship and leadership will be greatly missed, he will be remembered with great affection and admiration for years to come; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the 79th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby honor the life of Joe E. Moreno and extend deepest sympathy to the members of his family: to his parents, Alice and Frank Moreno; to his brother, Mario Moreno and his wife, Margot; to his sister, Sarah Blancett; to his nephews, Drake, Andrew, Matthew, and Taylor; to his grandmother, Olivia Moreno; and to all those who mourn the passing of this esteemed public servant, beloved son and brother, and friend; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of Representatives and Senate adjourn this day, they do so in memory of the Honorable Joe E. Moreno.

### **INTRODUCTION OF THE FAMILY OF REPRESENTATIVE JOE E. MORENO**

Representative Farrar introduced the following members of Representative J. Moreno's family as follows:

His parents, Frank and Alice Moreno; sister, Sarah Blancett; brother, Mario Moreno and his wife Margot; grandmother, Olivia Moreno; nephews, Drake, Matthew, Andrew, and Taylor; cousin, Ernie Farres, his wife Danielle, and their children Zachery, Noah, Jeremy, and Lauren; Uncle Vic and his wife Marta; cousin Eric; a very special person in Joe's life, the lady he loved, Alejandra; and other cousins and family members.

Former representatives John Mabry, Miguel Wise, and Dale Tillery, and Representatives Dunnam, Coleman, Martinez Fischer, Thompson, P. Moreno, Geren, and Anchia presented members of the Moreno family with State of Texas flags flown over the Capitol.

### **ADDRESS BY REPRESENTATIVE HARDCASTLE**

Frank, Alice, Mario and Sarah. Over the last few days, we have celebrated the life of Joe Moreno. Each of us standing here are leftovers of the class of the 76th Legislature, and we all came in together, and Joe came in with our class. He was my deskmate, and that is where we became friends. What greater pleasure did you have in this body than to sit with a guy like Joe and be friends with him. I will never forget the first words you said to me when we were swearing in. You said, "Take care of my baby, because he is a good boy." And my kids heard that and we have gone on from there, and kept on it. This class also—we've invited Ms. Crownover up here because Ronnie started in our class, and we have invited Ms. Noriega up here because Rick is in our class and she is representing Rick. But, this class started a lot of traditions on this house floor, some of them still



continue today. We started the tradition as far as we know of standing together as we pass bills, and they all stood with John Davis, Friday, as we passed Joe's bill off the calendar, and they all stand with me today. All the freshman classes since then have continued that tradition of showing moral support and standing with the freshman when they pass their first bill, or a particularly hard bill. We have shared many joys. We have heard a lot this morning about the joys of serving in this body with Joe. Joe loved this process, and we loved serving with him. We were honored to serve with him. We, the members of the freshman class of the 76th Legislature who all came into this process with Joe, would like to present you with his chair to take home and serve as a constant symbol of the process that Joe loved so much. We loved him, and we love you, and so, you'll never forget that he loved this process so much. Thank you.

### **ADDRESS BY REPRESENTATIVE ESCOBAR**

Mr. and Mrs. Moreno and the whole Moreno family, I've got a lot of good memories, like everyone else, about Joe. I'd just like to share one that brought a lot of joy and laughter and showed his character.

About two weeks ago, back over where I sit next to Paul Moreno, Joe came by and said, "Hey Paul, tell Juan what you did to me during the summer." Paul says to me, "Joe came to my office and he had his girlfriend with him. He said, 'Paul, I want to present you my girlfriend.'" Paul told the young lady, "Are you blind or what?"

The girl said, "Why are you asking that?"

"You must have a dog hidden somewhere because you can't see what he looks like."

Joe said, "You see Juan, what he told me."

The last day I saw Joe was Thursday. I went to the lounge to have something to eat, Representative Thompson had brought some chicken and some other members had brought some chicken. He said, "Hey, you got some chicken?" He always gave me a fist for a handshake, I learned that here. That's right, I learned it from Joe. So I had my chicken, and I left and went and talked to my children. He said, "I'll see you later, bro." That was the last time that I saw him.

There's a lot of allergies here in Austin and I've been with a little bit of congestion, but I'm going to sing a song that we sang in my church. It's just a simple song that expresses love, eternal love for our people. I hope it brings some closure and some condolence to your soul. As to what Joe was, with your respect, I'll sing a song.

Representative Escobar performed "Amor Eterno."

Representative Gallego recognized Bishop Aymonds who delivered the following benediction:

Loving and faithful God, we give you thanks for this sacred time that we have spent together in remembering Joe. We thank you for his life, for his faith. We thank you for his courage to stand for what is right. We thank you for the love that he had for his family and for our State of Texas. We have remembered him. We now commend him to you as you have given him life through his mother and father. We now ask you to give him eternal life in your kingdom. We pray that at the end of this earthly dwelling, we will meet again and share again Joe's friendship and his love.

Lord God, we ask your blessings upon the family of Joe, particularly his mother and father, his sister, his brother, his extended family, his coworkers, his colleagues in the house. In this time of grief, we ask you to raise them up and to give them consolation and peace, which only you can give.

We also ask your blessings on all the work that goes on in this chamber. We ask your blessing upon the speaker and all those who work with him to lead our state. May they do so following the courage and the example of Joe. We make this prayer, as always, in the spirit of faith for your God, living and reigning forever and ever.

Representative Gallego concluded the service by thanking the guests and the Moreno family for attending today's memorial session honoring the life of Representative Joe. E. Moreno.