

By: Zwiener

H.R. No. 2253

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Shirley Harris, the first Black graduate of Texas
2 State University in San Marcos, paved the way for other students of
3 color to pursue higher education; and

4 WHEREAS, A native of Smithville, Shirley Harris graduated
5 from Edwards High School in Gonzales as salutatorian; after
6 attending San Antonio College for two years, she transferred to
7 what was then known as Southwest Texas State College in 1965; two
8 years prior, a federal judge had officially ordered the school's
9 desegregation, and there were only a handful of Black students
10 enrolled when Ms. Harris arrived; she earned a bachelor's degree in
11 education on May 26, 1967, becoming the first Black person to
12 graduate from the school; and

13 WHEREAS, Following her graduation, Ms. Harris embarked on a
14 career as an elementary school teacher in the South San Antonio
15 Independent School District; after a year, she moved to Briscoe
16 Elementary School in San Antonio ISD, where she taught for more than
17 four decades before retiring in 2011; over the course of her 42-year
18 tenure, she made a positive difference in the lives of thousands of
19 young Texans; she passed away on March 31, 2018, at the age of 73;
20 and

21 WHEREAS, At a time when the aspirations of Black women were
22 impeded by racism, Shirley Harris fulfilled her ambition to obtain
23 a degree and to become a teacher, and her courage and fierce
24 determination are a source of lasting inspiration to countless men

1 and women across the Lone Star State and beyond; now, therefore, be
2 it

3 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 88th Texas
4 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life and legacy of Shirley
5 Harris; and, be it further

6 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
7 prepared for her family and that when the Texas House of
8 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of
9 Ms. Harris.