

By: Blanco

S.R. No. 321

SENATE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The city of El Paso lost an admired civic leader and social justice advocate with the passing of Pete T. Duarte on February 4, 2023, at the age of 84; and

WHEREAS, Born in Moorpark, California, on June 9, 1938, Pete Duarte was the son of Eduardo Simon and Maria Jesus Duarte; he labored in the fields alongside his parents and became the first college graduate in his family, earning degrees from California State College and The University of Texas at El Paso and completing the Harvard University Hispanic Health Leadership Program; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Duarte served with the Peace Corps in the Dominican Republic and then became a health care organizer in El Paso for the War on Poverty; recognizing the importance of a holistic approach, he united other leaders in founding what became the Centro de Salud Familiar La Fe clinic and served for 12 years as its executive director; in the early 1990s, he became CEO of Thomason General Hospital, later University Medical Center of El Paso, which was twice named among America's Top 100 Hospitals during his tenure as "chief servant," his preferred title; he also led Project Upward Bound at UTEP, where he helped establish Chicano Studies; and

WHEREAS, Over the years, Mr. Duarte garnered numerous accolades, and the Pete Duarte Head Start center was named in his

honor; he returned the prestigious Golden Nugget alumni award to UTEP in 2011 in solidarity with students protesting the cancellation of the holiday honoring Cesar Chavez, a personal hero and role model; the university quickly restored the observance; and

WHEREAS, Deeply devoted to his family, Mr. Duarte was a loving husband to Joy, and thereafter Irma, and proud father of four children, Eduardo, Pedro, Marean, and Lilia; as the adoring "Lito" of 13 grandchildren, he shared countless *besos* and ice cream cones; and

WHEREAS, Pete Duarte made a lasting, positive difference in El Paso through his vision and leadership, and those he left behind will treasure their memories of his warmth, wit, and passion for service; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the 88th Texas Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life of Pete T. Duarte and extend sincere sympathy to the members of his family; and to all who mourn his passing; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be prepared for his family and that when the Texas Senate adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Pete Duarte.