

By: Luna

H.R. No. 518

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, It is with deep sadness that we pay tribute to the  
2 memory of a great leader of this state, the Honorable Irma Rangel,  
3 who passed away on this day, March 18, 2003, having served the Lone  
4 Star State and its citizens with the utmost distinction for the past  
5 26 years; and

6 WHEREAS, A 1952 graduate of Texas A&I University, she  
7 initially pursued a teaching career before deciding to follow her  
8 lifelong dream of becoming a lawyer, a goal that was fulfilled with  
9 her graduation from St. Mary's University in 1969 with her degree in  
10 jurisprudence; and

11 WHEREAS, She applied her legal expertise in a variety of  
12 positions, including federal law clerk, assistant district  
13 attorney for Nueces County, Robstown city attorney, and solo  
14 practitioner; and

15 WHEREAS, In 1976 she turned to the political arena and her  
16 successful campaign enabled Ms. Rangel to become the first Mexican  
17 American woman elected to the Texas House of Representatives;  
18 during her more than quarter-century as a house member, she  
19 combined an unrelenting conviction to do what she believed was  
20 right with her trademark enthusiasm and charm, winning admirers and  
21 supporters while also initiating important legislation; and

22 WHEREAS, Ms. Rangel was perhaps best known for her leadership  
23 in the area of higher education, for she played a pivotal role in  
24 working to improve minorities' access to higher education and

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1 sponsored the state's 10 percent law, guaranteeing admission into  
2 state colleges and universities for those students who graduate in  
3 the top 10 percent of their class; and

4 WHEREAS, A deserving recipient of numerous awards and  
5 accolades, she was inducted into the Texas Women's Hall of Fame in  
6 1994 by Governor Ann Richards, was named Legislator of the Year in  
7 1997 by the Mexican American Bar Association, and was voted Woman of  
8 the Year in 1998 by the Texas Young Democrats; and

9 WHEREAS, The fifth longest serving member in the house,  
10 Representative Rangel was also a role model and mentor to many of  
11 her fellow members, and she won the respect and admiration of all  
12 through the intelligence and compassion she brought to each  
13 challenge she confronted; with a personality as distinctive as her  
14 trademark earrings and greeting, Irma Rangel will not be forgotten  
15 by those who have been privileged to work by her side, or by the  
16 countless Texans who revered her as a valiant and indomitable  
17 champion of social justice; now, therefore, be it

18 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 78th Texas  
19 Legislature hereby pay special tribute to the life of its esteemed  
20 colleague, the Honorable Irma Rangel, and extend sincere sympathy  
21 to the many loved ones she leaves behind; and, be it further

22 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
23 prepared for the members of her family and that when the Texas House  
24 of Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of State  
25 Representative Irma Rangel.