

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 405

In Memory
of
The Honorable Irma Rangel

WHEREAS, The Senate of the State of Texas joins the citizens of Kingsville and Texans across the state in mourning the loss of the Honorable Irma Rangel, who died March 18, 2003, at the age of 71; and

WHEREAS, Irma Rangel was born May 15, 1931, in Kingsville; she earned a bachelor's degree from Texas A&I University in Kingsville in 1952; and

WHEREAS, An individual who broke new ground for Mexican American women in the State of Texas, Irma Rangel pursued the study and practice of law long before the profession was open to many minority women; following a 14-year career as a teacher and principal in South Texas, as well as in California and Venezuela, she earned a law degree from Saint Mary's University in 1969 and went on to serve for two years as a law clerk for federal District Judge Adrian Spears; and

WHEREAS, During 1971 and 1972, Irma Rangel served as one of the first Mexican American female assistant district attorneys for Nueces County, and she was the Robstown city attorney from 1975 to 1977; she was a partner in Garcia and Rangel Law Firm from 1973 to 1983 and then had her own practice in Kingsville until 1993; and

WHEREAS, In 1976, Irma Rangel became the first Mexican American woman elected to the Texas House of Representatives; at the time of her death during the 78th Legislative Session, she was serving her 15th term, representing Brooks, Cameron, Jim Hogg, Kenedy, Kleberg, and Willacy counties and was vice chair of the Higher Education Committee and a member of the Border and International Affairs Committee; and

WHEREAS, Representative Rangel had the fifth longest tenure in the House, and over the years, she achieved a distinguished record as a legislator; she was the first Mexican American to serve as chair of the House Committee on Higher Education and the first Mexican American woman elected as chair of the Mexican American Legislative Caucus; and

WHEREAS, A fervent supporter of higher education, she vigorously fought to ensure more resources for our state's higher education system and supported the expansion of educational opportunities to all of our state's residents; and

WHEREAS, In 1977, she sponsored House Bill 1755, which provided employment and educational programs for mothers with dependent children; in 1997, she sponsored landmark legislation mandating that students who graduate in the top 10 percent of their high school class be granted admission to any state university; in 1999, she co-authored a bill that created the TEXAS Grant Program, which provided financial support for approximately 11,000 low-income students to attend college; during the 77th Legislative Session, she helped assure the establishment of the first professional school in South Texas, a pharmacy school for Texas A&M University-Kingsville; and

WHEREAS, During a lifetime of dedicated public service, Irma Rangel earned the respect and admiration of citizens throughout our state, and she was rewarded with numerous accolades; in 1994, she was inducted into the Texas Women's Hall of Fame, and in 1997, the Mexican American Bar Association honored her with the Legislator of the Year Award; she earned the Woman of the Year Award in 1998 from the Texas Young Democrats, the Lifetime Achievement Award in 2000 from the Houston Hispanic Bar Association, and the Irma Rangel Public Service Award in 2001 from the Kingsville Chamber of Commerce; and

WHEREAS, Irma Rangel brought a wealth of knowledge and wisdom to her service in the Texas House of Representatives, and she was a role model for future generations of Texans who dream of pursuing public service; and

WHEREAS, Noted for her engaging personality, her courage, and her strength, Irma Rangel lived her life to the fullest and was beloved by many, and she leaves behind memories that will be treasured forever by her family and friends throughout the state; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 78th Legislature, hereby extend sincere condolences to the bereaved family of Irma Rangel; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be prepared for the members of her family as an expression of deepest sympathy from the Texas Senate, and that when the Senate adjourns this day, it do so in memory of the Honorable Irma Rangel.

Lucio

Armbrister
Averitt
Barrientos
Bivins
Brimer
Carona
Deuell
Duncan
Ellis
Estes

Fraser
Gallegos
Harris
Hinojosa
Jackson
Janek
Lindsay
Madla
Nelson
Ogden

Ratliff
Shapiro
Shapleigh
Staples
Van de Putte
Wentworth
West
Whitmire
Williams
Zaffirini

Dewhurst, President of the Senate

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on March 19, 2003, by a rising vote.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate