

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, An esteemed educator and civil rights activist, Dr.
2 Blandina Cardenas has rendered exceptional service to The
3 University of Texas-Pan American; and

4 WHEREAS, Born and raised in the border community of Del Rio,
5 Blandina Cardenas earned a bachelor's degree in journalism from The
6 University of Texas at Austin; she returned to her hometown to teach
7 preschool children from the migrant community and garnered national
8 praise for the educational models she developed as a public school
9 teacher; in 1977, she accepted a presidential appointment to serve
10 as commissioner for children, youth, and families in the Department
11 of Health, Education, and Welfare; she also completed her doctoral
12 studies in education administration at the University of
13 Massachusetts at Amherst; and

14 WHEREAS, In 1980, Dr. Cardenas was appointed to the U.S.
15 Commission on Civil Rights, where she served for more than a decade;
16 she went on to work closely with various advocacy groups, including
17 the Inter-American Children's Institute, and she directed the
18 Southwest Center on Values, Achievement and Community in Education
19 at the LBJ Institute at Southwest Texas State University; she later
20 joined The University of Texas at San Antonio as a professor before
21 being named dean of its College of Education; she made further
22 contributions to the field of education through her affiliation
23 with the American Council on Education and through her work with
24 Mexican universities, for which she received the highest honor

1 bestowed on a noncitizen by the government of Mexico; and

2 WHEREAS, The first woman to lead The University of Texas-Pan
3 American, Dr. Cardenas became its seventh president in 2004; in
4 that role, she launched several initiatives aimed at establishing
5 the university as a model of higher education for a diverse student
6 population; she also worked to modernize the institution and raise
7 its academic standards; continuing her efforts to encourage
8 underrepresented groups to pursue higher education, she oversaw an
9 increase in financial aid from \$84 million to \$111 million and
10 provided much needed relief to many of the families from the
11 neighboring communities who struggled to pay for college; and

12 WHEREAS, In nearly five years as president of UTPA, Dr.
13 Cardenas helped raise the number of students receiving degrees,
14 including significant increases in nursing and graduate degrees, as
15 well as the number of internships and study abroad programs being
16 offered to students; in addition, she supported the creation of
17 collaborative partnerships with South Texas College and the
18 addition of a doctoral program in rehabilitation counseling; she
19 also ushered in a new era of research in such fields as economics,
20 border life, medicine, and engineering; moreover, under her skilled
21 leadership, UTPA saw increased faculty and student scholarly
22 productivity, with more undergraduate students publishing or
23 presenting their academic research and more students in master's
24 programs writing theses; and

25 WHEREAS, Dr. Blandina Cardenas has demonstrated an
26 unwavering commitment to making higher education more accessible to
27 the residents of South Texas, and her work has benefited both UTPA

H.R. No. 271

1 and the surrounding community in myriad ways; now, therefore, be it

2 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 81st Texas
3 Legislature hereby commend Dr. Blandina Cardenas for her notable
4 contributions to The University of Texas-Pan American and extend to
5 her sincere best wishes for the future; and, be it further

6 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
7 prepared for Dr. Cardenas as an expression of high regard by the
8 Texas House of Representatives.

Pena
Gonzales
Guillen
Martinez

H.R. No. 271

Speaker of the House

I certify that H.R. No. 271 was adopted by the House on
February 9, 2009, by a non-record vote.

Chief Clerk of the House