

By: Alonzo

H.R. No. 301

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, The Irma Lerma Rangel Young Women's Leadership  
2 School is commemorating in the 2008-2009 school year its fifth year  
3 of providing an outstanding education to area youth, and this  
4 occasion provides a welcome opportunity to recognize the school as  
5 well as its namesake, the Honorable Irma Rangel; and

6           WHEREAS, Opened in the Oak Lawn neighborhood of Dallas in the  
7 fall of 2004, the Irma Lerma Rangel Young Women's Leadership School  
8 is a magnet program of the Dallas Independent School District;  
9 initially serving young women in grades seven and eight, the school  
10 now accommodates grades six through 11; it is the first all-girls  
11 public school in Dallas and part of a move that allows educators to  
12 focus on the different ways boys and girls learn; and

13           WHEREAS, Through leadership seminars, weekly advisory  
14 meetings, and partnerships with educational and cultural  
15 organizations, the Dallas school provides students with a rigorous  
16 course of study that prepares them for college and addresses their  
17 developmental needs; teachers work with students following a  
18 project-oriented curriculum that emphasizes math, science, and  
19 technology, but also offers ample learning opportunities in foreign  
20 languages and humanities; in addition to providing an excellent  
21 academic curriculum, the school encourages students to develop a  
22 strong sense of ethics and civic responsibility and to become  
23 leaders in their community; and

24           WHEREAS, It is fitting that such an admirable and progressive

1 institution be named for Irma Rangel, who was a trailblazer and one  
2 of the leading proponents of the state's efforts to improve public  
3 school and higher education systems; Ms. Rangel taught for 14 years  
4 in Texas, California, and Venezuela before changing careers and  
5 earning a degree at St. Mary's School of Law in San Antonio; after  
6 working as an assistant district attorney for two years in Corpus  
7 Christi, she returned to her hometown of Kingsville in 1973 to open  
8 her own law practice; and

9       WHEREAS, When Ms. Rangel won a seat in the house of  
10 representatives in 1976, she became the first Hispanic woman  
11 elected to the Texas Legislature; she spent more than 26 years in  
12 the Texas House and was the fifth most-senior member of this body at  
13 the time of her death in 2003; while serving in the house, she  
14 sponsored legislation establishing a pharmacy school for Texas A&M  
15 University--Kingsville, now known as the Irma Lerma Rangel College  
16 of Pharmacy; and

17       WHEREAS, The first Mexican American woman to be appointed  
18 chair of a house committee, Representative Rangel was named chair  
19 of the House Committee on Higher Education in 1995, and she served  
20 in that role for four consecutive legislative sessions; she was  
21 also the first woman elected chair of the Mexican American  
22 Legislative Caucus and the first Mexican American to receive the  
23 G. J. Sutton Award from the Legislative Black Caucus; and

24       WHEREAS, A passionate advocate for the poor, the needy, and  
25 the underserved, Irma Rangel was a true Texas pioneer who worked  
26 tirelessly to make a college education accessible to all citizens,  
27 and it is indeed appropriate that an important part of her legacy

1 lies with the outstanding young women who are attending the school  
2 that bears her name; now, therefore, be it

3           RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 81st Texas  
4 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the rich and accomplished life of  
5 the Honorable Irma Rangel and honor the students of the Irma Lerma  
6 Rangel Young Women's Leadership School on the fifth anniversary of  
7 the opening of the school; and, be it further

8           RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
9 prepared for the school as an expression of high regard by the Texas  
10 House of Representatives.