

By: Gallego

H.R. No. 596

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The citizens of Del Rio lost a beloved educator and
2 community leader with the passing of Irene Cardenas Cardwell on
3 August 25, 2008, at the age of 99; and

4 WHEREAS, Irene Cardenas was born on April 9, 1909, to Petra
5 and Serapio Cardenas of Del Rio; she graduated from Del Rio High
6 School in 1927 and earned a teacher's certificate and master's
7 degree in education from Sul Ross State Teachers College in Alpine;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, In 1932, this esteemed Texan married the love of her
10 life, Ernest Cardwell, and the couple shared 59 rewarding years of
11 matrimony; they became the parents of four children, Teresita,
12 Louis, Thomas, and David, and later had the pleasure of welcoming
13 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren into their family; and

14 WHEREAS, Ms. Cardwell made innumerable contributions to the
15 lives of young Texans during her more than four decades in the field
16 of education; she taught first grade for over 31 years in the San
17 Felipe Independent School District, worked as an elementary school
18 principal for 14 years, and served at length in Washington, D.C., as
19 a presidential appointee to the National Advisory Council on the
20 Education of Disadvantaged Children; in 1999, on the date of her
21 90th birthday, her myriad accomplishments were recognized when
22 Travis Elementary, where she had previously worked, was renamed
23 Irene C. Cardwell Elementary School in her honor; and

24 WHEREAS, Dedicated to bettering her community, Ms. Cardwell

1 contributed to numerous committees and organizations and often took
2 on leadership roles in these efforts; a brief list of the groups she
3 aided includes the March of Dimes, the United Fund Drive, the
4 Diamond Jubilee Celebration Committee, the Val Verde Memorial
5 Hospital Women's Auxiliary, and the Val Verde County Library Board,
6 and there were many others; she also instituted such initiatives as
7 free citizenship classes with LULAC Council 353 and social
8 enhancement through the Boots and Bows Square Dance Club, and her
9 role in the formation of the first Girl Scout troop in her district
10 earned her the title of "Woman of Distinction" from the Girl Scouts
11 El Camino Council; and

12 WHEREAS, Many other accolades were conferred upon Ms.
13 Cardwell throughout her remarkable life; she was honored by the
14 Texas House of Representatives, by two Texas governors, by
15 President Richard Nixon for her service to disadvantaged children,
16 and by President Harry Truman for her contributions to the
17 Selective Service System; her contributions in education were
18 further acknowledged by the American Association of University
19 Women and the Texas Congress of Parents and Teachers, and her
20 diligent work in service to her church earned her the Archbishop
21 Francis Furey Bronze Medal as well as other honors; moreover, she
22 was named Lions Club Citizen of the Year, given the community
23 service award by the Knights of Columbus, and recognized by the U.S.
24 Department of Justice Immigration and Naturalization Service as
25 well as Casa de la Cultura in Del Rio; and

26 WHEREAS, Irene Cardwell led an accomplished, purposeful life
27 and inspired countless people with her words and deeds; although

1 she is deeply missed, her legacy of diligence, faith, and service to
2 her community will long resonate in Texas and throughout the
3 nation; now, therefore, be it

4 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 81st Texas
5 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life of Irene Cardenas
6 Cardwell and extend sincere sympathy to the members of her family:
7 to her children, Louis Ernest Cardwell, Teresita Cardwell Rodriguez
8 and her husband, Donato, Thomas E. Cardwell and his wife, Libby, and
9 David E. Cardwell and his wife, Peggy; to her brother, Jesus
10 Cardenas; to her grandchildren, Donato Rodriguez III and his wife,
11 Dana, Linda Donovan and her husband, Jim, Tess Tejan, Louis
12 Cardwell and his wife, Pam, Nelson Cardwell and his wife, Rhonda,
13 and John, William, Belia, Ernest, and Theresa Cardwell; to her 14
14 great-grandchildren; and to her other relatives and friends; and,
15 be it further

16 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
17 prepared for her family and that when the Texas House of
18 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Irene
19 Cardwell.