

By: Moody

H.R. No. 1242

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, The State of Texas lost a revered elder statesman  
2 with the death of the Honorable Raymond L. Telles, Jr., on March 8,  
3 2013, at the age of 97, and his passing has deeply saddened admirers  
4 across the Lone Star State and beyond; and

5           WHEREAS, A trailblazer in government and international  
6 diplomacy, Raymond Telles was the first Hispanic mayor of a major  
7 American city and the first Hispanic United States ambassador; he  
8 led El Paso from 1957 to 1961, and his effective management paved  
9 the way for other Latinos in politics across the nation; and

10           WHEREAS, Ambassador Telles was born in El Paso to Ramon and  
11 Angela Telles on September 5, 1915; after graduating from Texas  
12 Western College, he began his career with the United States  
13 Department of Justice; he answered his nation's call to duty in 1941  
14 with service in the United States Air Force and eventually attained  
15 the rank of colonel; along the way, he served as chief of the  
16 lend-lease program for South and Central America and as a military  
17 aide to Presidents Harry S. Truman and Dwight D. Eisenhower, and  
18 for his accomplishments, he received the Order of the Southern  
19 Cross from Brazil, Columbian wings, the Mexican Legion of Merit,  
20 and the Peruvian Flying Cross; and

21           WHEREAS, Following World War II, Colonel Telles returned to  
22 his hometown, where he was elected to the first of four terms as El  
23 Paso County Clerk; he was recalled to military service during the  
24 Korean War and commanded the U.S. Air Force 67th Tactical and

1 Reconnaissance Group, for which he earned the Bronze Star Medal;  
2 and

3         WHEREAS, This remarkable Texan overcame prejudice and  
4 persevered to win a hard-fought 1957 mayoral campaign, and his  
5 skill, expertise, and collaborative management style won him an  
6 uncontested second term; in 1961, he left the office of mayor when  
7 he was appointed ambassador to Costa Rica by President John F.  
8 Kennedy; he was subsequently named chair of the U.S.-Mexico border  
9 commission by President Lyndon B. Johnson, and he went on to serve  
10 as head of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission during both  
11 the Nixon and Ford administrations; throughout his tenure in the  
12 federal government, he was a valued advisor and friend to both  
13 Republican and Democratic presidents; and

14         WHEREAS, While at home in the halls of power, Ambassador  
15 Telles was naturally modest, and he unfailingly credited those who  
16 helped him accomplish his goals; he was, in turn, a wise and caring  
17 mentor who personally helped to nurture succeeding generations of  
18 Latino leaders; he was named Mayor Emeritus of El Paso in 2006, and  
19 he was recognized for a lifetime of achievement by the Hispanos  
20 Triunfadores Awards program in 2008, among myriad other accolades;  
21 and

22         WHEREAS, Mr. Telles shared a fulfilling marriage of 68 years  
23 with the love of his life, Delfina Navarro, and he was devoted to  
24 his daughters, Cynthia and Patricia, and his two grandsons, Raymond  
25 and Daniel; and

26         WHEREAS, Through his commitment to progress and his selfless  
27 dedication to public service, Raymond Telles made a lasting,

1 positive difference in the world around him, and his achievements  
2 will continue to inspire his fellow Texans and all Americans for  
3 many years to come; now, therefore, be it

4         RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 83rd Texas  
5 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life of the Honorable Raymond  
6 L. Telles, Jr., and extend sincere condolences to the members of  
7 his family: to his daughters, Dr. Cynthia Telles and Dr. Patricia  
8 Telles-Irvin; to his grandsons, Raymond David Jimenez and Daniel  
9 Irvin-Telles; and to his other relatives and friends; and, be it  
10 further

11         RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
12 prepared for the members of his family and that when the Texas House  
13 of Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of the  
14 Honorable Raymond L. Telles, Jr.