

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 452

In Memory
of
Raymond L. Telles

WHEREAS, The Senate of the State of Texas honors and pays tribute to the life of former El Paso mayor Raymond L. Telles, who died March 8, 2013, at the age of 97; and

WHEREAS, This remarkable pioneer was the first Mexican American mayor of a major Southwestern city and was a former ambassador to Costa Rica; he spent his life in public service and in the political limelight; he was an advisor to President John F. Kennedy, but he also remained committed to local politics; he was particularly dedicated to elevating Hispanics to public office; and

WHEREAS, Born September 5, 1915, Raymond Telles grew up in a very different El Paso than the one he left behind; Mr. Telles is credited with challenging certain beliefs held by the political establishment in the 1940s and 1950s and disproving the notion that Mexican Americans were not electable and were not capable of effectively running a city; he was elected to four terms as El Paso County clerk and two terms as mayor of El Paso, holding the latter office from 1957 to 1961; he ran his campaigns with dignity and served as a model for a whole generation; and

WHEREAS, In the 1960s, Mr. Telles was one of the highest-ranking Mexican Americans in the federal government; he was a trusted advisor to many national politicians and agencies; and

WHEREAS, This highly regarded public servant has been called a founding father of contemporary Latino politics in the United States; his accomplishments while serving El Paso included securing the world-renowned Kress art collection for the El Paso Art Museum and pushing the city to hire more Hispanics for police and fire department jobs; he was recognized in 2006 as Mayor Emeritus of El Paso, and in 2008, he received a lifetime achievement award from the Hispanos Triunfadores Awards program; and

WHEREAS, A loving husband and father, he shared more than 65 years with his late wife, Delfina, and he taught his children to value service, honesty, loyalty, and community; and

WHEREAS, In his death, this honorable patriot and decorated military veteran leaves behind an extraordinary legacy as a dedicated public servant who gave Mexican Americans a voice in politics and who truly served his city, state, and country; his memory will long be cherished by those who shared in his life; now, therefore, be it

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RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 83rd Legislature, hereby extend sincere condolences to the bereaved family of Raymond L. Telles; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be prepared for his 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 Raymond Telles.

Rodriguez

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on March 13, 2013, by a rising vote.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate