

By: Martinez Fischer

H.R. No. 2938

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, In recognition of her lifetime of purposeful
2 endeavor, Sister Norma Gutierrez is being posthumously honored as
3 an Unsung Hero by the Westside Development Corporation at the
4 organization's 2015 Westside Honors Exitos en Nuestro Barrio Gala,
5 taking place in San Antonio on May 21; and

6 WHEREAS, Norma Gutierrez was born in Mercedes, one of 12
7 children of migrant farm workers; she attended The University of
8 Texas--Pan American, and as a member of a campus ministry group, she
9 traveled to San Antonio to hear Mother Teresa speak in the early
10 1970s; it was this pivotal moment that led to her decision to join a
11 convent at the Missionary Catechists of Divine Providence in San
12 Antonio; and

13 WHEREAS, Taking her vows after eight years in the order,
14 Sister Gutierrez went on to earn her master's degree in theology
15 with a minor in philosophy from Our Lady of the Lake University; she
16 was first assigned to work with children and young adults in
17 California, Brownsville, and San Antonio, and she later served as
18 the youth director of the Diocese of Austin; and

19 WHEREAS, Inspired by the work of Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, a
20 psychiatrist who studied the nature of grief and dying, Sister
21 Gutierrez went on to dedicate herself to hospice care; she received
22 encouragement and support from renowned trauma surgeon Dr. James
23 "Red" Duke Jr. of Memorial Hermann Hospital, where she finished
24 part of her clinical pastoral education; and

1 WHEREAS, Through her comforting presence, this gracious
2 clergywoman strove to provide patients with peace and dignity as
3 they neared the end of their lives; she shared with them her belief
4 in the importance of bringing closure to their relationships with
5 loved ones, and at times, she made gowns to dress infants who had
6 died at birth, as a small gesture of compassion to parents
7 confronting terrible heartbreak; and

8 WHEREAS, Sister Gutierrez demonstrated the strength of her
9 convictions during her own courageous battle with cancer; when the
10 disease returned following a long remission, she chose to forgo
11 chemotherapy so that she could continue to fulfill her purpose in
12 the few weeks she had left, and she urged nurses to devote their
13 time to patients other than herself; she was surrounded by the love
14 of a large family, including nieces and nephews whom she treasured
15 deeply; and

16 WHEREAS, Expressing faith, hope, and love throughout her
17 remarkable journey on this earth, Sister Norma Gutierrez made a
18 meaningful difference in the lives of those under her care, and she
19 is truly deserving of this prestigious honor; now, therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 84th Texas
21 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life of Sister Norma
22 Gutierrez on the occasion of her posthumous recognition by the
23 Westside Development Corporation; and, be it further

24 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
25 prepared for the family of Sister Gutierrez as an expression of high
26 regard by the Texas House of Representatives.