

By: Rodriguez of Travis

H.R. No. 3370

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Austin residents lost an esteemed community leader
2 with the passing of Andrew Reyes Ramirez on April 17, 2015, at the
3 age of 73; and

4 WHEREAS, The son of David and Oralia Ramirez, Andy Ramirez
5 was born in Austin on February 13, 1942; he was raised by his mother
6 in the tight-knit Mexican American community on the city's East
7 Side while his father served in the military during World War II; as
8 a boy, he worked long hours shining shoes, but he still succeeded in
9 making straight A's; in 1961, he married Nellie Ancira, and they
10 became the parents of twins, Andrew and Annette; and

11 WHEREAS, Mr. Ramirez worked at the Glastron Boat Factory
12 before serving his country in the United States Navy; subsequently,
13 he majored in math at The University of Texas at Austin, where he
14 became acutely aware of discrimination against Mexican Americans;
15 in the course of helping his parents run the Chuck Wagon Barbecue,
16 he met many political leaders, and he developed strong loyalties to
17 both the Mexican American and African American communities; and

18 WHEREAS, Determined to advance social justice, Mr. Ramirez
19 became one of the organizers of the historic Economy Furniture
20 strike; he then joined the staff of the governor's office to provide
21 technical assistance and oversight to War on Poverty Community
22 Action programs in South Texas; later, he was appointed to
23 supervise the Austin Community Action Agency, and when it was
24 incorporated into city government, he became Austin's director of

1 human development programs; he administered antipoverty projects
2 as well as initiatives in manpower development, economic
3 development, and juvenile justice, and he secured millions of
4 dollars in grants to benefit his fellow citizens; moreover, he
5 increased the employment of minorities and women, and he was
6 involved in such organizations as the National League of Cities;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, In the early 1970s, Mr. Ramirez urged his friend,
9 Buddy Ruiz, to run for the city council, and together, they waged a
10 spirited campaign that helped energize political activism among
11 Mexican Americans; Mr. Ramirez married Dr. Blandina Cardenas in
12 1978, and while she served in the Carter administration, he studied
13 public administration and policy at George Washington University;
14 after helping to found the National Hispanic Housing Coalition, he
15 served as its assistant director; he also gave generously of his
16 time, talents, and resources to Democratic candidates for office at
17 all levels; and

18 WHEREAS, Mr. Ramirez worked in nonprofit development for
19 Solar America, an alternative energy company, before transitioning
20 to the private sector; as a founder of the Avante Corporation, he
21 engaged in commercial real estate development in San Antonio and
22 Austin; he went on to establish several companies, including Rz and
23 Associates and Rz Communications, and he was active in the U.S.
24 Hispanic Contractors Association de Austin and the Greater Austin
25 Hispanic Chamber of Commerce; in 1995, he received the Lifetime
26 Achievement Award from the chamber, and five years later, he was
27 named a special advisor to the governor of Texas; and

1 WHEREAS, Committed to expanding opportunity in Austin, he
2 mentored dozens of aspiring entrepreneurs, and he counseled young
3 Latinos seeking to start nonprofit organizations; in 2010, he
4 founded the Bellas Artes Alliance to promote Latino arts and
5 culture; with his wife, Linda Wolf Ramirez, he sponsored the
6 popular annual Pan Americana Festival, which the alliance produced
7 in cooperation with the city and the Emma S. Barrientos Mexican
8 American Cultural Center; and

9 WHEREAS, Andrew Ramirez devoted himself wholeheartedly to
10 making Austin a more equitable and inclusive place, and his life
11 stands as an inspiring example of positive civic engagement; now,
12 therefore, be it

13 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 84th Texas
14 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the memory of Andrew Reyes
15 Ramirez and extend sincere sympathy to the members of his family: to
16 his wife, Linda Wolf Ramirez; to his children, Dorothy Lopez,
17 Andrew Ramirez Jr. and his wife, Sara, Annette Kjar and her husband,
18 Michael, and Alexandro Rudolpho Ramirez; to his stepdaughter,
19 Avelon Pang; to his brothers, David Ramirez and Robert Loera; to his
20 sisters, Yolanda Blanco and Mary Jane Haros; to his grandchildren
21 and great-grandchildren; and to his many other relatives and
22 friends; and, be it further

23 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
24 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of
25 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Andrew
26 Ramirez.