

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, A rich and purposeful life drew to a close with the
2 death of educator, musician, and community activist Mariana Ornelas
3 of San Antonio on March 6, 2017, at the age of 67; and

4 WHEREAS, Mariana Ornelas was born to Thalia Girdis Sculos in
5 Framingham, Massachusetts, on September 18, 1949; after earning a
6 bachelor's degree in Spanish and French from Marietta College in
7 1971, she studied Latin American literature at the Universidad
8 Nacional Autónoma de México in Mexico City and fell in love with
9 Latin culture; for five years, she lived in Paraguay, where she
10 learned to play the harp; and

11 WHEREAS, Returning to the United States, Ms. Ornelas studied
12 public policy and citizen participation at Tufts University; it was
13 there that she met Willie Velasquez, the founder of the Southwest
14 Voter Registration Education Project, and after earning her
15 master's degree in 1982, she moved to San Antonio to work for the
16 organization; and

17 WHEREAS, Ms. Ornelas lived most of the rest of her life in San
18 Antonio, and as a professor of humanities and sociology at Palo Alto
19 College from 1997 until 2016, she taught the school's first Mexican
20 American women's studies courses and introduced her students to
21 civic and political leaders and musicians; and

22 WHEREAS, Active in the community, Ms. Ornelas served on the
23 boards of the Esperanza Peace and Justice Center and other
24 organizations; she was a cofounder and president of the Dellview

1 Area Neighborhood Association, and later in life, she returned to
2 the study of the harp, often sharing her music with appreciative
3 audiences at churches and in nursing homes; and

4 WHEREAS, A gifted scholar and musician and a passionate
5 advocate for social justice, Mariana Ornelas devoted her life to
6 furthering the ideals she held dear, and she leaves behind a record
7 of compassion and civic engagement that will continue to inspire
8 all who knew her; now, therefore, be it

9 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 85th Texas
10 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the memory of Mariana Ornelas and
11 extend heartfelt sympathy to her uncle, Constantine Rockas, to her
12 aunt, Dorothea Fotis, and to her other relatives and many friends;
13 and, be it further

14 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
15 prepared for her family and that when the Texas House of
16 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Mariana
17 Ornelas.

Bernal

H.R. No. 1029

Speaker of the House

I certify that H.R. No. 1029 was unanimously adopted by a rising vote of the House on March 30, 2017.

Chief Clerk of the House