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By:  Clardy H.R. No. 46

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, Admired philanthropist Louise Herrington Ornelas of Tyler passed away on December 18, 2018, at the age of 93; and

WHEREAS, Born to Bill and Minnie Herrington in Las Cruces, New Mexico, on June 15, 1925, the former Lou Herrington grew up on a tenant farm in Arp as the second of seven children; she married Martin Eugene Pettis and following his untimely death, she was joined in matrimony to Robert M. "Bob" Rogers; they founded TCA Cable TV in 1981, and as they were building their business, she took on many responsibilities, even flagging traffic while her husband climbed poles; after a divorce, she married Joseph Z. Ornelas in 1992; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Ornelas volunteered in Tyler hospitals as a Pink Lady for three decades, and she was a longtime benefactor of the nursing program at Baylor University; in 1999, she and Mr. Ornelas gave a $13 million endowment to the School of Nursing, which Baylor renamed in her honor; the couple later made the lead gift for the purchase of a building in Dallas for use as the new academic home of the Louise Herrington School of Nursing; "Ms. Lou," as she was known, took particular delight in giving scholarships to numerous students who could not otherwise afford to pursue a career in the field, and she established both The Lou Ornelas Endowment for the School of Nursing and The Louise Herrington Endowed Scholarship Fund in Nursing; moreover, she was a major donor for the Rogers Engineering and Computer Science Building; and

WHEREAS, Over the years, Mrs. Ornelas also gave generously to Tyler Junior College, providing resources for many scholarships, as well as for women's athletic programs, the Rogers Student Center, the Ornelas Health and Physical Education Center, and the Ornelas Hall Complex; the Ornelases funded a number of facilities at The University of Texas at Tyler, among them the Fine and Visual Arts Complex and the Louise Herrington Patriot Center, and they endowed a professorship and scholarships in nursing, engineering, fine arts, and education; in addition, they were tremendous benefactors of East Texas Baptist University, Christus Trinity Mother Frances Health System, and Brook Hill School; Mrs. Ornelas served on the boards of ETBU and TJC and on the UT-Tyler Development Board, and she took on leadership roles in a host of civic and charitable organizations, including the East Texas Symphony League and the Salvation Army; a woman of strong faith, she was a member of Green Acres Baptist Church for 55 years; and

WHEREAS, Baylor granted Mrs. Ornelas an honorary nursing degree, and it conferred on her some of its highest honors, among them the Founder's Medal, the James Huckins Medallion, and the Herbert H. Reynolds Exemplary Service Award; she was presented with honorary degrees from Tyler Junior College and East Texas Baptist University as well, and her myriad accolades included the national Horatio Alger Award; in 2001, she and her husband received the T. B. Butler Award recognizing Tyler's most outstanding citizens, and their contributions to higher education earned them the prestigious 2012 Mirabeau B. Lamar Medal; and

WHEREAS, Through her altruism and tireless civic engagement, Louise Herrington Ornelas touched the lives of innumerable people, and although she will be deeply missed, those who were privileged to know her will forever remember her warmth, kindness, and wonderful sense of humor; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 86th Texas Legislature hereby pay tribute to the memory of Louise Herrington Ornelas and extend sincere condolences to the members of her family: to her husband of 26 years, Joseph Z. Ornelas; to her daughters, Becky Wangner and her husband, Rob, Sheryl Palmer, Cindy Scott, Rita Seldenrust and her husband, John, and Andrea Wegener and her husband, Dave; to her sons, Rick Rogers and his wife, Mary Jane, Randy Rogers and his wife, Brenda, and Russell Rogers and his wife, Esther; to her 20 grandchildren: Michelle Drewett, Andrea Lazenby, Richard, Ryan, Austin, Bethany, Rebecca, Reid, Russ, and Robby Rogers, Connor, David, Jackson, and Molly Wangner, Rachel Tillery, and Lauren, Elise, Andrew, and Rachel Seldenrust, and Benjamin Wegener; to her 8 great-grandchildren: Brandon, Daniel, and Beau Drewett, William and Spencer Lazenby, Chuck and Victoria Grace Tillery, and Crew Wangner; to her sister, Ann Kimrey; to her brother, Billy Creel Herrington and his wife, Peggy; and to her many other relatives and friends.