86R19846 BPG-D

By:  Thompson of Harris H.R. No. 924

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, The passing of former state representative Paul Cruz Moreno of El Paso on September 1, 2017, at the age of 86, concluded a remarkable life of service as a voice for the voiceless and most vulnerable; and

WHEREAS, A legislator for more than four decades, Mr. Moreno was first elected in 1966 and fought tirelessly for the poor, people of color, low-income workers, people with disabilities, and others confronting barriers to full participation in the American Dream; he pushed for legislation requiring developers to provide water and sanitation to colonias, and he strove to make public buildings and transportation more accessible to people with disabilities; in addition, he challenged the state's public school financing system, sought to regulate college tuition, and advocated for better teacher salaries; he also worked to pass a minimum wage bill; his fierce dedication and strong moral compass earned him a reputation as the "Conscience of the House"; and

WHEREAS, In 1971, Mr. Moreno was part of the "Dirty Thirty," a bipartisan group that opposed the speaker and other officials charged with corruption; as a member of the Higher Education Committee, he successfully championed greater access to opportunity and played a key role in enhancing support for The University of Texas at El Paso; he further served as vice chair of the Redistricting, Urban Affairs, and State, Federal, and International Relations Committees, as well as the Retirement and Aging Subcommittee on Budget and Oversight, and he was the inaugural chair of the Mexican American Legislative Caucus; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Moreno was acknowledged as the first Mexican American "Dean of the Texas House" when he became its longest tenured member in 2007, and the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials recognized him as the longest serving Hispanic public official in the country; among myriad accolades, he received the PUSH Excel National Award, and the El Paso Independent School District named Paul C. Moreno Elementary School in his honor in 1996; and

WHEREAS, An El Paso native, Mr. Moreno was born to Avelina Ramirez and Reyes Moreno Sr. on April 28, 1931, and grew up with 11 siblings; he began his community organizing at the age of 14, helping to launch the first Catholic Youth Organization in his hometown; three years later, he dropped out of Bowie High School to enlist in the U.S. Marine Corps, and he became a highly decorated veteran of the Korean War; he went on to work as a Marine recruiter until a diving accident left him a quadriplegic; never limited by his need for a wheelchair, he graduated from UTEP and The University of Texas School of Law; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Moreno was a dynamic leader in the Chicano Movement and in a host of organizations, among them the Mexican American Bar Association, the Democratic Party, the El Paso Legal Assistance Society, and Tejano Democrats; he was a wise mentor to generations of public servants, and he was admired by all for his unsparing honesty, as well as his integrity, humility, and profound compassion; and

WHEREAS, Devoted to his large extended family, Mr. Moreno was the proud father of a daughter, Annette, as well as the grandfather of Innette, Evette, and Amarette, and great-grandfather of Josiah and Ariah; and

WHEREAS, Paul Moreno is deeply missed, but his exceptional contributions continue to resonate, and his legacy remains a lasting source of inspiration; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 86th Texas Legislature hereby pay tribute to the Honorable Paul Cruz Moreno and extend sincere sympathy to all who mourn his passing; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of former state representative Paul Cruz Moreno.