86R27340 BK-D

By:  Gervin-Hawkins H.R. No. 1269

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, The passing of former state representative Ruth Jones McClendon of San Antonio on December 19, 2017, at the age of 74, brought a great loss to the people of Texas, whom she so commendably served over the course of her remarkable career in public life; and

WHEREAS, Born in Houston on October 5, 1943, Ms. McClendon attended Texas Southern University and went on to earn a master's degree from Webster University in Missouri; before entering politics, she worked for 17 years as a juvenile probation officer; she was later elected to the San Antonio City Council and served from 1993 until 1996, when she won a seat in the state legislature as the representative for House District 120 in East San Antonio, a seat she held for the next two decades; and

WHEREAS, A dynamic, tenacious legislator, Ruth McClendon won not only the high regard but also the genuine affection of members on both sides of the aisle for her unfailing integrity, her joyous spirit, and her ability to never make a hard-fought struggle personal; intently focused on serving her constituents and the people of Texas, she worked assiduously to build consensus and advance measures for the common good; and

WHEREAS, In particular, Representative McClendon was a staunch advocate for education, for children's programs, and for laws protecting the elderly and the infirm; she also authored legislation approved by the 84th Legislature that established a commission to study wrongful convictions in the Texas criminal justice system; possessed of a keen business sense, she additionally sought to strengthen the state's transportation infrastructure; in 2005, she proposed a constitutional amendment, subsequently approved by voters, to dedicate a fund for rail relocation and improvement, and in every legislature thereafter, she filed bills to create a consistent means for financing such work; during her lengthy tenure in the house, Ms. McClendon served as a senior member of the Transportation and Appropriations Committees and as chair of budget and oversight for agencies under the jurisdiction of the Pensions and Investments Committee; she also chaired the Rules and Resolutions Committee; and

WHEREAS, Along with other causes that were dear to her heart, helping young people learn about the political system that impacted their daily lives became a focus of her attention, leading her to establish the McClendon Legislative Scholars Program through a partnership with The University of Texas at San Antonio; this accomplished lawmaker received a Lifetime Achievement Award from Capitol Inside and was named by *Texas Monthly* to its list of the 10 Best Legislators in 2015; in 2016, in recognition of her efforts, the Ruth Jones McClendon Learning Academy, a charter campus for middle school students, opened in San Antonio; and

WHEREAS, Representative McClendon balanced the responsibilities of her office with the rewarding family life she shared with her husband, Denver McClendon, her children, Thaddies and Vanessa, and her stepchildren, Mark, Angela, and Meredith; she considered motherhood to be one of her proudest achievements and greatest joys, and in her later years, she had the pleasure of seeing her family grow to include 11 grandchildren, Maliyah, Elizabeth, Thaddies, Bomani, Reseun, Remi, Alade, Nicholas, Preston, Sydney, and Lawrence; and

WHEREAS, Ruth Jones McClendon devoted a distinguished legislative career to bettering the lives of her fellow Texans, particularly those whose voices are seldom heard, and she will long be remembered and revered for exemplifying the highest ideals of public service; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 86th Texas Legislature hereby pay tribute to the memory of the Honorable Ruth Jones McClendon and extend deepest sympathy to her loved ones, to her many friends, and to all those who mourn her passing; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be prepared for her family and that when the Texas House of Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of the Honorable Ruth Jones McClendon.