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By:  Guillen H.R. No. 59

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, A full and generous life drew to a close with the death of Joseph LaMantia Jr. of McAllen on June 14, 2021, at the age of 88; and

WHEREAS, Joe LaMantia was born to Joseph and Verna LaMantia in 1933, and he grew up in South Texas with five sisters, Marie, Ann, Shirley, Verna, and Joan; his family settled in the Rio Grande Valley in 1965, and in 1977 Mr. LaMantia started L&F Distributors, a wholesale beer distribution company which has since grown to encompass seven locations with nearly 1,100 employees serving 53 counties across the Lone Star State; and

WHEREAS, A longtime champion of education, Mr. LaMantia established one of the first scholarships for women athletes at The University of Texas-Pan American, and the scholarship was named for his first wife, Ann LaMantia, who passed away in 1983; in addition, L&F Distributors raised more than $5 million over eight years for the Hispanic Scholarship Fund, and in 2002 he established the Stars Scholarship Fund, which has disbursed over $35 million to more than 17,000 students in South and West Texas; and

WHEREAS, Mr. LaMantia served on the board of the Texas Department of Corrections for 15 years, and he was an active supporter of the Rio Grande Cancer Treatment Research Foundation, the American Heart Association, the South Texas Communities for Youth Service, and the Special Olympics, among many other worthwhile organizations; he was recognized as Border Texan of the Year and as a Distinguished Citizen by the Boy Scouts of America Rio Grande Council, and his numerous other honors include the Citizen of the Year award from The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, the Bridge Builder Award from UTPA, and the Golden Eagle Award from the Rio Grande Valley Hispanic Chamber of Commerce; and

WHEREAS, Following the death of his first wife, Mr. LaMantia went on to share a rewarding marriage with Derrelene LaMantia that spanned 36 years; he was a devoted father to his children, Val, Joe, Greg, Steve, and Tony, and his stepchildren, Jennifer and Lori, and he was eventually blessed with many grandchildren and great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, A leader in his community, a successful entrepreneur, and a generous philanthropist, Joe LaMantia leaves behind a record of service that will continue to inspire all those who were privileged to know him; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 87th Texas Legislature, 2nd Called Session, hereby pay tribute to the memory of Joseph LaMantia Jr. and extend heartfelt sympathy to his family and his many friends; 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 Joe LaMantia.