

By: Ortega

H.R. No. 277

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, The passing of The University of Texas at El Paso  
2 president emerita Dr. Diana Natalicio on September 24, 2021, at the  
3 age of 82, has deeply saddened the many people whose lives were  
4 touched by her inspiring leadership and steadfast commitment to  
5 education; and

6           WHEREAS, Born in St. Louis on August 25, 1939, Diana  
7 Natalicio received her bachelor's degree in Spanish from Saint  
8 Louis University and her master's degree in Portuguese and  
9 doctorate in linguistics from The University of Texas at Austin;  
10 she joined UTEP as an assistant professor of linguistics in 1971,  
11 and after serving as chair of the modern languages department, dean  
12 of liberal arts, and vice president for academic affairs, she  
13 became the 10th president of the university on February 11, 1988,  
14 and the first woman to hold the office; and

15           WHEREAS, Over the course of her extraordinary 31-year tenure  
16 as president, Dr. Natalicio helped raise UTEP enrollment from  
17 nearly 15,000 to more than 25,000 students, and she helped increase  
18 the population of Mexican American students to 80 percent of the  
19 student body; under her dynamic leadership, the school's annual  
20 budget increased from \$65 million to almost \$450 million, and she  
21 oversaw a tenfold increase in research spending; the school also  
22 increased the number of its doctoral programs from one in 1988 to 22  
23 in 2019, and that same year, UTEP was named a top-tier R1 doctoral  
24 research university by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions

1 of Higher Education; Dr. Natalicio retired in August 2019; and

2 WHEREAS, A world-renowned leader in her profession,  
3 Dr. Natalicio was appointed by President George H. W. Bush to the  
4 Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic  
5 Americans and by President Bill Clinton to the National Science  
6 Board, which she served for 12 years, including three terms as vice  
7 chair; she also sat on the boards of the Hispanic Scholarship Fund,  
8 The Rockefeller Foundation, the American Council on Education, the  
9 National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering, the  
10 Association of Public and Land-grant Universities, and the  
11 U.S.-Mexico Foundation for Science, among many others; and

12 WHEREAS, Dr. Natalicio's numerous honors included the  
13 Conquistador Award from the City of El Paso, the Academic  
14 Leadership Award from Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Orden  
15 Mexicana del Águila Azteca from the president of Mexico, the  
16 TIAA-CREF Theodore M. Hesburgh Award for Leadership Excellence,  
17 the Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Prize in Education, and induction into  
18 the Texas Women's Hall of Fame; in 2017, *Fortune* magazine named her  
19 one of the World's 50 Greatest Leaders, and in 2016, she was  
20 included in *Time* magazine's list of the 100 Most Influential  
21 People; she received honorary doctorates from universities around  
22 the world; and

23 WHEREAS, Through her trailblazing achievements and numerous  
24 civic contributions, Diana Natalicio made a lasting, positive  
25 difference in the lives of countless students, and she will forever  
26 be remembered with deep admiration by all who were privileged to  
27 know her; now, therefore, be it

1           RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 87th Texas  
2 Legislature, 3rd Called Session, hereby pay tribute to the memory  
3 of Dr. Diana Natalicio and extend heartfelt sympathy to her loved  
4 ones and friends; and, be it further

5           RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
6 prepared for her family and that when the Texas House of  
7 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Dr. Diana  
8 Natalicio.