

By: Blanco

S.R. No. 46

SENATE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, An exemplary life dedicated to educational opportunity for all has drawn to a close with the death of The University of Texas at El Paso president emerita Dr. Diana Natalicio on September 24, 2021, at the age of 82; and

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

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, Diana Natalicio earned the respect and admiration of all who knew her for her vision, her dedication, and her commitment to a high-quality education for every American, and

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she leaves behind a legacy that will resonate in El Paso and beyond for years to come; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the 87th Texas Legislature, 3rd Called Session, hereby pay tribute to the life and achievements of Dr. Diana Natalicio and extend sincere condolences to her family and to her many friends and colleagues; and, be it further

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