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By:  González of Dallas H.C.R. No. 64

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, State office buildings should be named after the most laudable of citizens, but the namesake of the John H. Reagan State Office Building was a secessionist who ardently promoted white supremacy throughout his lifetime; and

WHEREAS, During the Confederacy, John H. Reagan served in the cabinet of Jefferson Davis as postmaster general; he later won election as a United States senator and as railroad commissioner of Texas, and he used his stature to vigorously champion the myth of the Lost Cause; a major voice for racist ideology even into the early 20th century, he proposed legislation to prevent African Americans from exercising their right to vote, helping to lay the groundwork for generations of systematic disenfranchisement; and

WHEREAS, The building named after John H. Reagan currently stands as an insult to communities that have suffered under his legacy of oppression and to the millions of Texans who abhor his discredited values; to make amends, the state would do well to honor instead a woman of color who worked tirelessly to break down the barriers he helped erect; and

WHEREAS, Kingsville native Irma Rangel, who attended a segregated elementary school, became the first Mexican American woman elected to the Texas Legislature in 1976; dedicated to higher education and equity for minorities and the impoverished, she secured passage of numerous bills that expanded access to advancement, including the legislation that provided funding for the first professional school in South Texas; in appreciation, Texas A&M University-Kingsville named that school the Irma Rangel College of Pharmacy; she ably chaired the House Higher Education Committee from 1995 until 2003, the year she lost her battle with brain cancer; and

WHEREAS, Irma Rangel embodied the highest ideals of the Lone Star State through her unyielding commitment to equal rights and opportunity for all Texans, and it would be fitting to remedy an affront to those ideals by renaming the John H. Reagan Building in her honor; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the 87th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby direct the Texas Facilities Commission to rename the John H. Reagan State Office Building the Irma Rangel State Office Building; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the secretary of state forward an official copy of this resolution to the chair and executive director of the Texas Facilities Commission.