87R16189 JGH-D

By:  Cole H.R. No. 412

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, A life dedicated to community leadership and social justice drew to a close with the death of Bertha Sadler Means of Austin on March 16, 2021, at the age of 100; and

WHEREAS, The former Bertha Elizabeth Sadler was born in May 1920 in Valley Mills, a long-established Black community in McLennan and Bosque counties founded by her grandfather, the Reverend James Sadler; she was an intelligent and athletic young woman, and she graduated from A. J. Moore High School in Waco; and

WHEREAS, After moving to Austin to attend what is now Huston-Tillotson University, she met James H. Means, and they married in December 1941, going on to share 66 years together until his death in 2008; the same year they were wed, the couple helped establish St. James' Episcopal Church in East Austin, and they started a successful business, Harlem Cab, which later became the Austin Cab Company; Mrs. Means was also one of the first Black teachers to work in Austin's White-majority schools, and the Austin school district later named Bertha Sadler Means Young Women's Leadership Academy in her honor; and

WHEREAS, In 1962, Mrs. Means organized protests against discrimination at the Ice Palace skating rink, and she became a leading civil rights activist in the city, serving as a member of the NAACP, the Austin Human Relations Commission, and the Urban League, as well as the Austin Parks Commission, the Town Lake Beautification Committee, and the city's bicentennial commission; she was a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha and a founder of the Austin chapter of Jack and Jill of America, and she helped bring the Ebony Fashion Fair to the city; moreover, she proudly attended the 2008 Democratic National Convention in support of Barack Obama; and

WHEREAS, Above all else, Mrs. Means took great pride in her five children, James, Ronald, Joan, Janet, and Patricia, and she was blessed with many grandchildren and great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, A woman who gave freely of her time, energy, and talent to make Austin a better place for all, Bertha Means was a true champion for justice, and she leaves behind a record of good works that will long resonate in the community she loved; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 87th Texas Legislature hereby pay tribute to the memory of Bertha Sadler Means and extend heartfelt sympathy to her family and many friends; 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 Bertha Sadler Means.