87R20414 TBO-D

By:  Morales of Harris H.R. No. 683

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, The businesses along Navigation Boulevard in Houston have contributed greatly to the vitality of the community, and they owe much to the legacy of pioneering restaurateur "Mama" Ninfa Laurenzo; and

WHEREAS, Navigation Boulevard runs through the East End, one of the oldest neighborhoods in Houston, and it was here in 1973 that Ninfa Laurenzo converted her factory, the Rio Grande Tortilla Company, into a restaurant, where she introduced the city to tacos al carbon; immediately popular with local residents, Ninfa's soon drew such celebrities as future president George H. W. Bush, musicians George Benson and Reba McEntire, and actors John Travolta, Rock Hudson, and Ben Vereen; and

WHEREAS, Since Ms. Laurenzo passed away in 2001, her legacy has been carried on by the Mandola and Laurenzo families, and thanks in part to her inspiration, Navigation Boulevard has become a destination for fine dining; today, it is home to some of the most respected restaurants in Harris County, including The Original Ninfa's, El Tiempo Restaurant and Cantina, Merida, Doña María, and Villa Arcos, among others; and

WHEREAS, In 2013, the East End District opened the Navigation Esplanade, an award-winning linear park that hosts a year-round farmers market and serves as the venue for many community festivals that celebrate the traditions of the neighborhood; in 2021, the East End Houston Cultural District released a short documentary celebrating the life and works of the "Godmother of Tex-Mex," *Ninfa Laurenzo: An East End Legacy*; and

WHEREAS, By carrying on in the spirit of Ninfa Laurenzo, the entrepreneurs of Navigation Boulevard continue to strengthen the culture and economy of their unique community, and they may indeed take great pride in their many achievements and proud heritage; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 87th Texas Legislature hereby commend the Navigation Boulevard business community for its success and pay tribute to the life and legacy of Ninfa Laurenzo; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be prepared for the Navigation Boulevard business community as an expression of high regard by the Texas House of Representatives.