

By: Cole

H.R. No. 412

R E S O L U T I O N

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

4 WHEREAS, The former Bertha Elizabeth Sadler was born in May
5 1920 in Valley Mills, a long-established Black community in
6 McLennan and Bosque counties founded by her grandfather, the
7 Reverend James Sadler; she was an intelligent and athletic young
8 woman, and she graduated from A. J. Moore High School in Waco; and

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

19 WHEREAS, In 1962, Mrs. Means organized protests against
20 discrimination at the Ice Palace skating rink, and she became a
21 leading civil rights activist in the city, serving as a member of
22 the NAACP, the Austin Human Relations Commission, and the Urban
23 League, as well as the Austin Parks Commission, the Town Lake
24 Beautification Committee, and the city's bicentennial commission;

1 she was a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha and a founder of the Austin
2 chapter of Jack and Jill of America, and she helped bring the Ebony
3 Fashion Fair to the city; moreover, she proudly attended the 2008
4 Democratic National Convention in support of Barack Obama; and

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

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

13 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 87th Texas
14 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the memory of Bertha Sadler Means
15 and extend heartfelt sympathy to her family and many friends; and,
16 be it further

17 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
18 prepared for her family and that when the Texas House of
19 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Bertha
20 Sadler Means.