

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 59

In Memory
of
Isabel Ortiz

WHEREAS, The Texas arts community lost a true giant with the passing of pioneering mariachi educator Isabel A. Ortiz of San Antonio on July 12, 2023, at the age of 90; and

WHEREAS, Born on February 12, 1933, the former Belle Aguilar was the daughter of Guadalupe and Roy Aguilar and grew up on San Antonio's Westside with her brother, Roy; she began honing her musical talents at a young age, playing professionally with Latin orchestras throughout the city, and she went on to graduate from Sidney Lanier High School and Our Lady of the Lake University; in 1953, she wed Daniel San Miguel Jr., and they became the proud parents of five children, Leticia, Daniel, Annabelle, Rosanne, and Roland; with the passing years, her family grew to include many beloved grandchildren and great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Over the course of her groundbreaking career in education, Mrs. Ortiz started the nation's first high school ballet folklorico program at her alma mater and the country's first mariachi program at Thomas Jefferson High School; her vision and dedicated advocacy helped expand mariachi instruction throughout the Lone Star State, and the art form is now taught at hundreds of schools in the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Ortiz and her husband Juan Ortiz founded Mariachi Campanas de America in 1978, and the renowned 12-piece ensemble went on to perform at venues all across the country, including at the White House for five U.S. presidents; the couple was instrumental in establishing the Texas Association of Mariachi Educators and the International Mariachi Conference and Festival; Mrs. Ortiz also gave generously of her time and talents to countless civic and political organizations, and she was inducted into the San Antonio Women's Hall of Fame; moreover, she was a woman of deep faith; and

WHEREAS, "The Mother of Mariachi," Belle Ortiz earned the admiration of all who knew her, not only for her work as a musician and educator but also for her exceptional generosity, compassion, and determination, and she leaves behind a legacy that her loved ones can remember with pride; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 88th Legislature, 3rd Called Session, hereby pay tribute to the life of Isabel A. Ortiz and extend heartfelt sympathy to her family and friends; and, be it further

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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 Belle Ortiz.

Menéndez

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on October 30, 2023, by a rising vote.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate