

By: Menéndez

S.R. No. 59

R E S O L U T I O N

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

4 WHEREAS, Born on February 12, 1933, the former Belle Aguilar
5 was the daughter of Guadalupe and Roy Aguilar and grew up on San
6 Antonio's Westside with her brother, Roy; she began honing her
7 musical talents at a young age, playing professionally with Latin
8 orchestras throughout the city, and she went on to graduate from
9 Sidney Lanier High School and Our Lady of the Lake University; in
10 1953, she wed Daniel San Miguel Jr., and they became the proud
11 parents of five children, Leticia, Daniel, Annabelle, Rosanne, and
12 Roland; with the passing years, her family grew to include many
13 beloved grandchildren and great-grandchildren; and

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

21 WHEREAS, Mrs. Ortiz and her husband Juan Ortiz founded
22 Mariachi Campanas de America in 1978, and the renowned 12-piece
23 ensemble went on to perform at venues all across the country,
24 including at the White House for five U.S. presidents; the couple

1 was instrumental in establishing the Texas Association of Mariachi
2 Educators and the International Mariachi Conference and Festival;
3 Mrs. Ortiz also gave generously of her time and talents to
4 countless civic and political organizations, and she was inducted
5 into the San Antonio Women's Hall of Fame; moreover, she was a woman
6 of deep faith; and

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

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

16 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
17 prepared for her family and that when the Texas Senate adjourns this
18 day, it do so in memory of Belle Ortiz.