

DOWNLOAD PDF IRMA RANGEL : THE FIRST LATINA IN THE TEXAS LEGISLATURE

Chapter 1 : Irma Rangel | Capstone Library

Formerly known as the "Public Policy Institute" (or PPI for short), we became the Irma Rangel Public Policy Institute in We are proud to help advance the legacy of the first Latina elected to the Texas Legislature.

From a point of virtually no representation in to the most recent elections of , Latinos have steadily gained representation in a wide range of states across the country. Their progress in some states has been dramatic and impressive, while in other states it has been slow, erratic and inconsistent. The more recent gains of the last three decades are clear indicators of the growth of the Latino population in many states beyond its so-called "traditional homeland" in the Southwestern United States. Some of the highlights of the Latino struggle for political representation are discussed below. In November , Texas voters ratified the poll tax by a two-to-one margin. For the next six decades, the poll tax would be very effective in keeping poor Latinos from participating in the electoral process. In addition to the poll tax, the primary means of limiting minority representation in Texas, California and other states was the process of gerrymandering. In many parts of the U. Gerrymandering resulted in voter dilution, in which the political representation of a unified minority was diminished or altogether obstructed. The end result was that even districts containing a majority of Latinos in some parts of the United States were unable to elect Hispanic representatives for many decades. Fighting alongside their Anglo brothers, hundreds of thousands of young Mexican-Americans and Puerto Ricans had taken part in the battle against the tyranny and oppression of Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan. These proud young veterans, having fought to defend their native land, believed it was time to assert their rights as American citizens. But added to that pride was the reward that survivors were given for their wartime service. Bill made it possible for thousands of Latino veterans to attend college and make a better life for themselves. Over the next decade, Latino veterans attended local and nationwide colleges and universities to obtain college degrees. In many cases, these vets were the first members of their families to receive a higher education. Armed with the weapon of education, many of these veterans became the Chicano leaders of the s, s and s. New Mexico 19 legislators , Arizona one legislator , Colorado 1 and Texas 1. In the case of Texas, the lone Latino, Arnold J. He would soon be joined by others. However, in , Kika was joined by Oscar M. In , Kika de la Garza and Oscar M. Laurel were joined by a third Chicano representative in the Texas House. Representing the th District, Position 3, Rosas would serve in this capacity for two legislative sessions. Senator Gonzalez would serve from to , before moving on to the U. From one representative Arnold J. Vale in the 52nd Session starting in January to the 57th session starting in January , Hispanic representation increased to seven legislators one senator and six representatives. While Kika de la Garza Hidalgo County and Rosas El Paso continued to serve their respective constituencies, four new representatives took their seats in the House: Longoria 38th District, Position 1, Pharr, Hidalgo County The representation of Tejanos would continue to increase in the following years. More detailed discussion of the Texas Legislature and elections in the s can be accessed at the following link: During this period, the number of Hispanic legislators in New Mexico had increased from 19 to 24, but most impressive was the jump from one state representative to six representatives in the State of Texas By this time, Henry Gonz? Arizona in the s In Arizona, a large influx of elected Latinos would take place during the s. By their representation in the Arizona Legislature had already increased to three from one representative in During the s, the following Hispanic representatives would take their seats within the Arizona Legislature: Carrillo served in the Arizona House of Representatives from to and to However, by the time the votes were tallied from the November 6 General Election, only two men would take their seats in the California Assembly. They were also the first Latinos to be elected to serve in the State Assembly since the election of Miguel Estudillo of Riverside County in The election of these two men set a precedent for a long line of Latino legislators committed to the service of their communities. But progress would be limited and sporadic over the next two decades. In the elections, only Philip Soto was left in office. Assemblyman Moreno had been opposed by another Chicano candidate, Dionisio Morales. In the elections, fifteen Chicanos

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ran for positions on the Assembly and all of them lost. Even, the one Latino incumbent Philip Soto lost his bid for re-election. Another nine Latinos ran for State Senate seats, and all of them lost as well. By this time, California had two Latino legislators and Colorado was experiencing a renewal with four legislators up from zero in New Mexico still held the largest number of Latino representatives 36, followed by Texas, which now had an unprecedented 12 representatives in both state houses. Paul Pioneer Press, June 13, and had previously worked as a social studies high school teacher. Vega served Senate District 52 from to and Senate District 39 from to Two years after Vega took office, Frank Rodriguez, Sr. Rodriguez served as the Representative for District 67A from to and District 65B from to A resident of St. Paul, Rodriguez served constituents in Dakota and Ramsey counties. With the departure of Senator Vega after , Minnesota would have no Hispanic legislators until , when both Carlos Mariani and Edwina Garcia took their respective seats in the Minnesota House of Representatives. Representation in Kansas Paul Feleciano, Jr. He served in the House from to and then moved on to the State Senate, where he represented the 28th District Wichita, Sedgwick County from to Feleciano served two terms as President of the National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators and in the fall of resigned his Senate seat to accept an appointment by Governor Kathleen Sebelius. In , Ramirez moved from the House to the Senate, where he served until Chicano Representation in the California Legislature By , Chicano representation in California had finally gained some traction in spite of its lethargic start in the s. Assemblymen Rod and Arango were followed in by the first Hispanic Democrat, Robert Menendez, who would serve in the General Assembly from to and in the New Jersey Senate from to , before moving on to the U. He subsequently made an unsuccessful bid as a Democratic candidate. After the elections, they had increased this to state posts spread across 19 of the 50 states Santa Fe New Mexican, Nov. The New Mexican explained that a "29 percent increase in voter registration" had most likely contributed to this significant increase in representation. In New Mexico, Hispanics made a net gain of five in the seat state legislature and thus now comprised 35 percent of the body, approaching parity in a state that was already 37 percent Hispanic. They went from 12 to 13 in the Senate and 22 to 26 in the House. The states with the largest number of Latino representatives were: Kansas now had three Hispanic representatives and Montana had two. With the election of Jose Lugo as Representative to the th District Bridgeport , Connecticut was now able to boast of one Latino delegate to its state house. Illinois In January , a three-judge federal panel in Chicago had ordered revisions in a redistricting plan to rearrange two Senate and three House districts to bring about an increase in Hispanic representation in Illinois Chicago Daily Herald, January 13, , page The states with the largest number of Latino legislators were: This new status provided Nelson Merced, a Puerto Rican, with the incentive to run for elected office. Merced became the first Puerto Rican and Latino elected to statewide office in Massachusetts, when he became the state representative for the 5th Suffolk District Dudley Square and North Dorchester. Representative Merced served for two terms until The legislators were spread across 17 states. The states with the largest number of Latino delegates were: This factor was crucial in explaining why representation parity had not been achieved in most states despite the obvious progress made in the previous few years. The legislators were spread across 21 states. He was elected as the Representative of the 25th Legislative District and served from to as the second Hispanic member of the Assembly after Paul Leveaga who served in Sandoval would also serve as the Nevada Attorney General from and and was elected the first Hispanic Governor of Nevada in November November Election By , the 28 million Latinos in the United States represented 11 percent of the population. However, fewer than half of these Latinos were eligible to vote. Michigan and Wisconsin In November , Latinos broke new ground in several states that did not have large Latino populations, including Michigan and Wisconsin. Taking office in , the Milwaukee-educated lawyer became the first Latino elected to the Wisconsin legislature and was re-elected in the next five elections. During the same election, Michigan native Valdemar "Valde" Garcia won a seat as a Republican representing central Michigan. In , he moved to the Michigan State Senate, where he still serves. The legislators were spread across 27 states and consisted of 51 State Senators and representatives in the lower houses. The states with the largest number of Latino delegates immediately after the election took place were: He continues to

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serve in that capacity. November While the general trend of the elections favored the Republicans, Latino Democrats made a number of gains in several states. Other breakthroughs occurred in Massachusetts where, for the first time, four Latinos were elected to serve in the legislature. However, the number of Latino registered voters in the State was considerably smaller: Although voter registration remained a stumbling block to representation in the California legislature, the total number of Latino state legislators had increased from 14 in to 27 in NALEO, Primary Election Profile, California. Like California, the number of qualified registered Latino voters in Texas was considerably smaller: However, in , Latino voters accounted for only 4. From to , there were six Latino state legislators, but in , their numbers increased dramatically to Latino gains were particularly noticeable in states that were not the traditional centers of Latino population. In Kansas, the number of Latinos in the state House of Representatives doubled from two to four. Although District 25 included parts of Salt Lake and Summit counties, both of which had significant Latino populations, Hispanics only made up 5. In , the total number of Latino state senators declined from 61 to 60, but the NALEO Educational Fund attributed this to some unique political developments in this election cycle rather than a long-term erosion of Latino political progress. For example, two Latino State Senators did not run for re-election, and no Latinos ran to replace them.

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Chapter 2 : RANGEL, IRMA LERMA | The Handbook of Texas Online| Texas State Historical Association (

Irma Lerma Rangel (May 15, - March 18,) was an attorney and Democratic state legislator based in Kingsville, Texas. Life and politics [edit] She was the youngest of three daughters.

As a Latina who is very proud of my heritage and of my hometown of El Paso, I learned some saddening but unsurprising things about the one of the most powerful bodies of state government in the country. In the last legislative session, there were only 30 were women, including 7 Latinas, in the member House of Representatives. In the upper chamber, just six of 31 senators were women. All told, just 19 percent of Texas lawmakers in were women – the 37th most in the nation – in a state where women make up more than half its population. This does not bode well when considering the many important issues affecting women that are legislated upon during each session. It is important to have the voices of women when acting upon important issues that directly affect them. Texas has the second-highest Latino population in the country. According to data from the U. Census Bureau , Hispanics comprise Hispanics have been the majority of students in Texas schools since the school year. But compare that to just 23 percent of state lawmakers being Hispanic – 35 in the House and seven in the Senate. Historical data shows how our representation has been slow in catching up with the reality of the gender and ethnic makeup of our state. Edith Wilmans, the first woman in the state House of Representatives, was elected in – 54 years after the Legislature held its first session but just three years after the 19th Amendment to the U. Constitution gave women the right to vote. From the s to the s, the number of women in the House ranged from two to four including two from El Paso in the s. The numbers started to gradually increase in the s, with 13 women elected to serve in – including Rep. Irma Rangel of Kingsville, the first Latina in the Legislature. The number of women in the House hit its peak in , when 38 women, including 10 Latinas, were elected. But to the disappointment of many, this decreased over the next three legislative sessions, leading to our current numbers. Fewer than 30 Latinas have been elected to serve in the Texas House in its entire history. However, in the upcoming November election, as many as 10 more could be elected three, including me, are unopposed or face no major-party opposition. And, while underrepresented in the Capitol, women are being recognized and valued for their service. House Speaker Joe Straus has appointed several women to high-ranking positions in prestigious and powerful House committees, including Appropriations, Higher Education and Public Health. I ran for the District 77 seat because El Paso suffers from a lower-than-average median income and lack of higher-paying jobs. We need to be able to keep our youth and provide greater opportunities for them. We have made tremendous advancements in the past 10 years, but much work remains to make El Paso a vibrant and thriving community. Legislation is a means of bringing about social change in our state. I look forward to serving my district and all El Pasoans in the next legislative session and to make a difference in the lives of many.

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Chapter 3 : Why I ran for the Texas Legislature

Irma Rangel (Chapter 3) was selected because she was the first Latina to be elected to the Texas House of Representatives. Judith Zaffirini (Chapter 4) was selected because of her position as the first of two Latinas elected to the Texas Senate.

Life and politics[edit] She was the youngest of three daughters. Her father, Presciliano Martinez Rangel, from Duval County , was orphaned at an early age and was able to attend school for only one year. Presciliano worked in farming, ranching, construction, and business. He became a merchant and owned an appliance store, a furniture store, a plumbing service, two barber shops, and a bar. He helped his wife build a successful dress shop located just off the main street of Kingsville, not restricted to the " Mexican side" of town. In , when Rangel was a teenager, her parents were able to buy some land near Texas College of Arts and Industries and hoped to build a home. But the land was in the "Anglo-white" district and the neighbors organized against allowing a " Mexican " family to build in their neighborhood. Ultimately, the family was allowed to design and build the Spanish Colonial style house across from the college campus that Rangel called home until her dying day. After graduating with degrees in education, Rangel began teaching in the neighboring community of Robstown. Then she and her oldest sister, Olga, decided to become teachers in an overseas program in Venezuela. This determination to be of service to society and fight for good causes impelled Rangel to return to Texas and attend St. She went on to become one of the first Hispanic female law clerks. After her clerkship with U. She returned to Kingsville, where she opened her own law practice and was the only Hispanic woman attorney in the city. But she had more ambitious goals and decided to run for a seat in the Texas House of Representatives. She gathered her girlhood friends, family, and a few newcomers to Kingsville and worked hard to win the seat that would make her the only Hispanic woman in the legislature. In , she closed her successful law practice in order to serve her district as a legislator full-time. Upon her death on March 17, , the Mexican American Legislative Caucus of the Texas House issued a news release, which summarized her legislative career. As the first Mexican-American to head the committee, Rangel led the charge to ensure educational opportunities for all children. In response to the Hopwood v. Texas decision, which ended affirmative action at all state colleges and universities, Rangel pioneered landmark legislation in House Bill which requires state colleges and universities to admit automatically all students who graduate in the top 10 percent of their high school class. Named for Representatives Rangel and Paul C. Moreno of El Paso , then the dean of the Texas House, the program provides undergraduate and graduate students from across Texas an opportunity to gain first-hand political experience working in the legislature. Cecilia Aros Hunter, professor and university archivist , was a personal family friend for more than thirty years. The collection consists mainly of legislative papers created while Rangel served in the Texas State Legislature for almost twenty-six years and papers left in her law office in Kingsville.

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Chapter 4 : 84(R) HR 91 - Introduced version - Bill Text

78th Legislature, R.S., HB , Relating to naming the school of pharmacy at Texas A&M University--Kingsville and its physical facility after Irma Rangel. Texas Legislature Online. H. Res. , th Congress, 1st Session.

Image courtesy of The University of Texas at Austin. She was the youngest of three daughters. Her father was a farmer and merchant, owning a bar, two barbershops, and several other stores. Her mother was a dressmaker and also owned her own shop. Nevertheless, as a Tejana, she grew up in an environment where racism was a fact of life. Choosing not to allow prejudice to limit their goals and expectations, the Rangel family broke down some barriers. Their announcement to build a home in an all-Anglo section of Kingsville, for example, surely invited protest, yet the episode ended successfully when a prominent member of the white community intervened on their behalf. Following graduation, she started a career as an educator. At the age of thirty-five, Rangel decided to pursue a law degree. She graduated from St. After her clerkship with Judge Adrian Spears, she became one of the first Hispanic female assistant district attorneys in Texas while working in the Corpus Christi office. In she returned to her hometown to become a partner in the firm Garcia and Rangel with her friend Hector Garcia. Rangel was the only female Hispanic attorney in Kingsville at the time. She later practiced solo from to Image courtesy of Legislative Reference Library of Texas. In she ran successfully for a seat in the Texas House of Representatives and became the first Mexican American woman elected to the Legislature. Rangel quickly earned a reputation as a proponent of higher education and equal rights for minorities and the poor. During her first legislative session, she sponsored and passed House Bill that provided education and employment programs for mothers with dependent children. In response to the Hopwood v. State of Texas decision, which declared affirmative action illegal in the admission process for institutions of higher education, Rangel co-authored House Bill with Senator Gonzalo Barrientos. Commonly referred to as the "Top Ten Percent Plan," the law required that all public colleges and universities in Texas automatically admit students who graduated in the top ten percent of their high school class. In Rangel continued her efforts to provide educational opportunities for her home region. House Bill provided the funding needed to create the first professional school in South Texas. Consequently, Rangel was honored for her contributions to higher education and commitment to the Hispanic community. In she received the "Margaret Brent Women Lawyers of Achievements Award," becoming the first Hispanic woman and the third Texan to receive the honor. Rangel survived breast and ovarian cancer before finally losing her battle to brain cancer on March 18, Austin American-Statesman, March 19, 20, Legislator and Role Model.

Chapter 5 : Texas Legislators: Past & Present - Mobile

Irma Lerma Rangel, first Mexican American female legislator, was born on May 15, , in the small South Texas town of Kingsville to Herminia L. Rangel and P.M. Rangel. At an early age, she developed a strong sense of compassion while realizing that some barriers to success must be broken.

Chapter 6 : Legislative Reference Library | Legislators and Leaders | Member profile

Irma Rangel () was the first Mexican American woman elected to the Texas House of Representatives and the first woman to serve as chair of the Mexican American Legislative Caucus.

Chapter 7 : UT College of Liberal Arts:

The profiles begin with Irma Rangel, the first Latina elected to the Texas House of Representatives, and Judith Zaffirini and Leticia Van de Putte, the only two Latinas to serve in the Texas Senate.

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Chapter 8 : MALLFoundation Â» REP. IRMA RANGEL

Irma Rangel: The First Latina in the Texas Legislature Sonia R. GarcÃ-a, Valerie Martinez-Ebers, Irasema Coronado, Sharon A. Navarro, Patricia A. Jaramillo, Patricia Madrid.

Chapter 9 : Las Mujeres Trailer: Pauline Martinez on Vimeo

Irma Rangel was the first Latina elected to the Texas Legislature and the architect of the state's top 10 percent rule. As a graduate research assistant for the Irma Rangel Public Policy.