



EL PASO COUNTY
STATE OF TEXAS

RESOLUTION



WHEREAS, the Chamizal Convention of 1964 returned land to Mexico for the first and only time in U.S. history by redrawing the boundary between El Paso and Ciudad Juárez and fixing the Río Grande through a concrete canal, ending a long-running dispute between the two countries; and,

WHEREAS, this displaced more than 5,600 South El Paso residents, creating a generational trauma imposed upon the community; and,

WHEREAS, members of the community demanded a seat at the table, denounced governmental transparency issues, and refused to accept the unfair offers made by the federal government for their property; and,

WHEREAS, this included Elvira “Vila” Escajeda, who challenged the Chamizal treaty by organizing the Chamizal Civic Association, which rallied residents living in El Paso’s southern barrios condemned by the treaty, and their allies, to successfully combat the terms of their displacement; and,

WHEREAS, Mahatma Gandhi stated: “A small body of determined spirits fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission can alter the course of history,” and Mrs. Escajeda did just that for her community; and,

WHEREAS, because of Mrs. Escajeda’s activism, residents received, among other compensations, fair-market-value for their properties rather than the federal government’s initial tax value offer; and,

WHEREAS, she was later awarded a medal by President Lyndon B. Johnson and special commendation from President Adolfo Lopez-Mateos for her involvement in helping to more equitably settle the treaty; and,

WHEREAS, acknowledging the contributions of residents like Mrs. Escajeda, who passed away in El Paso on Sunday, Jan. 16, 2022 at age 102, is part of understanding past and present of our community; and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the El Paso County Judge and Commissioners Court that El Paso County acknowledges the critical leadership of Elvira “Vila” Escajeda, thanks her for her activism on behalf of her

community, and extends its sincere condolences to her family on the occasion of her passing.

SIGNED, this 24th day of January, 2022

Commissioner Carlos Leon, Pct. 1

Commissioner David C. Stout, Pct. 2

Commissioner Iliana Holguin, Pct. 3

Commissioner Carl Robinson, Pct. 4

Ricardo A. Samaniego, County Judge