



2022 South Dakota Legislature

House Commemoration 8009

Introduced by: **Representative Mulally**

1 **A LEGISLATIVE COMMEMORATION, Honoring the extraordinary life of Maria "Mary"**
 2 **Victoria Piper and expressing condolences to her family.**

3 WHEREAS, Maria "Mary" Victoria Piper passed away peacefully on February 7, 2022, in
 4 Rapid City, South Dakota, at the age of 92. One of five children born to Mexican immigrants,
 5 Mary was the only one of her siblings to graduate from both high school and college, earning
 6 her nursing diploma from Incarnate Word College in 1951; and

7 WHEREAS, Mary took up the call to serve her country in the Air Force, and was stationed
 8 at Ellsworth Air Force Base in 1953 as a Second Lieutenant. She went on to earn her Nurse
 9 Diploma and Wings in 1955, before being honorably discharged as a First Lieutenant Air Force
 10 Reserve Nurse due to her first pregnancy. Mary contributed to future generations of this state
 11 by having six children; and

12 WHEREAS, Mary continued to serve her country and this state during her sixty-year tenure
 13 as a nurse and worked at St. John's Hospital, Bennett Clarkson Hospital, and the VA Black
 14 Hills Hospital in Hot Springs, and served the last twenty-eight years of her career at Sioux
 15 San Hospital before she proudly retired at 80 years old; and

16 WHEREAS, Mary received many recognitions for her years of successful service. In 2006,
 17 she was a Spirit of Dakota nominee and was awarded the Joy of Nursing Award by the SD
 18 Nurses Association. In 2010, she received the prestigious Carruth Wagner MD Award as the
 19 Nurse of the Year, and the Chief Nurse Officer Award for Outstanding Contributions to Nursing;
 20 and

21 WHEREAS, Mary continued to show her love of South Dakota even after retirement and
 22 her proud military service and patriotism kept her involved with The Retired Officers
 23 Association, The Military Officers Association, along with many other community organizations
 24 and;

1 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT COMMEMORATED, by the Ninety-Seventh Legislature of the
2 State of South Dakota, that Maria "Mary" Victoria Piper be honored and remembered for her
3 lifetime of exceptional service to her country and state.