

South Dakota Legislature



House Commemoration 8009

Introduced by: **Representative Mulally**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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