

2018 First Extraordinary Session
HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 10
BY REPRESENTATIVE HAZEL

A RESOLUTION

To express the condolences of the House of Representatives upon the death of Olla Rae Montalbano Chicola.

WHEREAS, it is with deep regret and profound sorrow that the members of the Louisiana House of Representatives learned of the death of Olla Rae Montalbano Chicola on February 22, 2018, at the age of ninety-one; and

WHEREAS, Olla Rae was born on June 27, 1926, to Tony and Agnes Guillot Montalbano in Bunkie, Louisiana; after graduating from Bunkie High School, she moved to Alexandria and attended business college; and

WHEREAS, she met her late husband, Nick Chicola, on a blind date, and they married when he returned from serving in World War II; and

WHEREAS, Nick and Olla Rae ran a successful grocery business for forty years, Nick's Food Center; Nick believed in fairness and selling food at the lowest possible prices; and

WHEREAS, they nurtured and educated seven children; meals at the Chicola household were legendary; Olla Rae was a master cook, and she shared her treasured recipes with forty direct descendants and friends; and

WHEREAS, she loved music, travel, dancing, and singing; and

WHEREAS, she was a devout Catholic who practiced her faith in everyday life; Olla Rae was a founding member of St. Francis Cabrini School and Church in Alexandria; and

WHEREAS, Father Gerard Foley and a group of parishioners from St. Francis Cabrini Church opened the soup kitchen, Manna House, in Alexandria twenty-eight years ago because of the great number of homeless people in the area; and

WHEREAS, Olla Rae was a driving force behind the opening of Manna House; she provided the building on Lee Street, which formerly housed her grocery store, and continued serving in the ministry for many years; and

WHEREAS, Olla Rae was resourceful in her efforts to find food for Manna House, which serves eight thousand meals a month; volunteers pick up leftovers from hospitals, day-old bread and bent canned goods from local grocery stores, donuts from Shipley donuts, and produce from correctional institution farms; and

WHEREAS, Manna House has a reputation for feeding the hungry seven days a week that extends beyond Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, President Clinton awarded Olla Rae the National Service Award for her undaunted efforts to feed thousands of people at the soup kitchen; and

WHEREAS, Olla Rae and the Manna House staff and volunteers were called to their work by the words of Matthew 25:35: "When I was hungry, you gave me food."; and

WHEREAS, in Louisiana, food is a significant part of life, and making and sharing food is how people connect; and

WHEREAS, Olla Rae encouraged volunteers and staff to take a tray and sit down and eat and talk to Manna House clients; she believed that the clients had to have courage, know that God loves them, and to not give up; and

WHEREAS, one of her granddaughters who serves as a volunteer says, "The truly amazing aspect of her life was that she gave so much and asked for nothing; she was a humble and grateful woman"; Mrs. Chicola leaves a legacy of a commitment to God, service to her community, and love for all people; and

WHEREAS, Olla Rae is survived by five of her seven children and their spouses, Barbara "Bobbie" and her husband Alan, Ronald and his wife Laura, Ted and his wife Kay, David and his wife Sharon, and Monty; her grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews, cousins, and many friends and Manna House staff and volunteers.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express sincere and heartfelt condolences upon the death of Olla Rae Montalbano Chicola, a woman who helped feed her community for over twenty years; does hereby extend appreciation for the pride and honor that she will forever bring to the city of Alexandria and to the state of Louisiana; and does hereby recognize and

record for posterity her outstanding accomplishments and her legacy of work in feeding the hungry.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the family of Olla Rae Montalbano Chicola.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES