

Date of Hearing: May 4, 2020

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Jim Frazier, Chair

ACR 139 (Arambula) – As Amended May 4, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Esther Padilla Memorial Highway

**SUMMARY:** Designates a portion of Interstate 168 (I-168) in Fresno County as the, “Esther Padilla Memorial Highway.” Specifically, **this resolution:**

- 1) Recounts the life and accomplishments of Esther Padilla, a 69-year resident of Fresno County who was the first Latina elected to the Fresno City Council and who also served as the Mayor Pro Tempore.
- 2) Designates the portion of I-168 beginning at the interchange with Interstate 180 (I-180) in Fresno County as the “Esther Padilla Memorial Highway.”
- 3) Requests that the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) determines the cost of appropriate signs, consistent with the signing requirements for the state highway system, showing the special designation and, upon receiving donations from non-state sources covering that cost, to erect those signs.

**EXISTING LAW:** Assigns Caltrans the responsibility of operating and maintaining state highways. This includes the installation and maintenance of highway signs.

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Unknown, but the resolution requests that Caltrans only erect the appropriate signage upon receiving donations from non-state sources covering the cost.

**COMMENTS:** Esther V. Negrette Padilla was born in Fowler, California in 1944. She was the youngest of 12 children born to her parents, Onesimo and Carmen Negrete, members of a proud farmworking family from Coahuila, Mexico. She earned her bachelors of art degree in 1966 and a master’s degree in social work in 1989 from the California State University, Fresno.

Esther was hailed for her community involvement and her tireless efforts as a social worker. She devoted 30 years of her career to social work with non-profit organizations, including the Fresno County Department of Social Services, Fresno County Head Start, and the Sequoia Community Health Foundation. Her commitment to public service is also reflected in the 10 years she spent volunteering for the United Farm Workers Union, where she met her loving husband Gilbert Padilla.

Notably, Esther was the first Latina woman elected to the Fresno City Council, where she served a four-year term representing a predominately Latino community in District 5. During her time as a councilmember, Esther played a pivotal role in the construction I-180 and I-168 by providing the critical swing vote which authorized the construction project. She also voted in favor of the construction of Chukchansi Park, formerly known as the Fresno Grizzlies Stadium. In addition to serving as a councilwoman, Esther also served as the Mayor Pro Tempore and served on other various commissions and boards –including the Fresno Council of Governments, Local Agency Formation Commission, and the Airport Land Use Commission.

Ester is survived by her loving husband, Gilbert, her daughter, Adelita, her stepchildren, Rebecca, Martha, Thomas, Yolanda, Jennie, James, and Sharon, her sisters, Carmen and Stella, as well as 14 grandchildren, 16 great-grandchildren, one great-great grandchild, and numerous nieces and nephews. The author introduced this resolution to honor the life of a respected and beloved woman who devoted her career to public service in the community of Fresno.

**REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:****Support**

Centro La Familia  
Clinica Sierra Vista  
Concerned Citizens for Representative Government  
Donor Network West  
Fresno Area Hispanic Foundation  
Mi Familia Vota

**Opposition**

None on file

**Analysis Prepared by:** Chanel Matney / TRANS. / (916) 319-2093