

2025 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 13

BY REPRESENTATIVE MENA

A RESOLUTION

To express the condolences of the House of Representatives upon the death of Aurelio Martínez.

WHEREAS, it is with immense sadness and profound regret that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana has learned of the tragic and untimely passing, on March 17, 2025, of Aurelio Martínez; and

WHEREAS, Born in Honduras in 1969, Aurelio Martínez grew up in a small Carribean village named Plapaya; he found inspiration in his father, who was a well-known local troubadour who improvised Paranda songs containing Garifuna roots rhythms and Latin sounds, and he learned to sing from his vocally-gifted mother; he was a brilliant drummer, following the influence of his uncles and grandfather; by the age of fourteen, Aurelio was a respected musician with a strong foundation in Garifuna rhythms, rituals, and songs; and

WHEREAS, the Garifuna are people of Amerindian and West African descent who originally lived on the island of St. Vincent in the Carribean; after being deported by the British government in 1796, the Garifuna landed on the island of Roatán in the Bay Islands of Honduras; the Garifuna now live in communities along the coasts of Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua; and

WHEREAS, Aurelio was an incredibly talented singer and songwriter who was known for his Garifuna music and considered a cultural ambassador of the Garifuna people; he was a genuine guardian of Garifuna heritage whose music bridged generations and served as a symbol of cultural resilience; he was a master of the guitar and his unmistakable voice brought Garifuna music to the world's most prestigious stages; he was the first Honduran musician to perform for the NPR Music Tiny Desk series; and

WHEREAS, Aurelio was an incredibly civic-minded individual whose impact extended beyond music; in 2005, he became the first Afro-Honduran elected to serve in the National Congress of Honduras, and he advocated for the rights and visibility of the Garifuna people; he earned a place in the Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative, where he worked alongside Youssou N'Dour; in 2022, he was recognized as a Mellon Fellow at New York University; and

WHEREAS, Aurelio was a passionate advocate of the Garifuna people and culture, and he toured the world sharing Garifuna music with audiences who were captivated by his passionate authenticity; although his tragic departure will leave a void, he preserved his soul in his music, and the legacy of his love for the Garifuna people shall live on in perpetuity in the melodies of his songs.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express heartfelt condolences on the death of Aurelio Martínez and does hereby extend sincerest wishes that his family, friends, and loved ones find comfort in their shared memories of his beautiful life.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES