
ENGROSSED RESOLUTION

Relating to: the life and public service of Richard Oulahan, founder and longtime executive director of Esperanza Unida, Inc.

Whereas, Richard Oulahan was born in New York and was one of seven children. He learned to speak Spanish fluently because his father worked as a reporter for *Time* magazine in Mexico City; and

Whereas, Richard Oulahan joined Esperanza Unida in 1973 and became executive director in 1978, and handled hundreds of unemployment claims for the organization during the late 1970s and early 1980s. During that time, the downsizing trend hit Milwaukee hard, resulting in several major manufacturing plant closings and more than 10,000 jobs lost; and

Whereas, Richard Oulahan is credited with revamping the organization to aid the dislocated workers in acquiring new skills. The funds and equipment he helped acquire led the agency to the “training business” model now in place; and

Whereas, he spent more than 30 years working tirelessly and passionately to build Esperanza Unida from a small south side agency that initially helped injured workers file compensation claims to an organization that won national acclaim for its successful job training programs for Milwaukee’s poor; and

Whereas, under Richard Oulahan’s direction the agency grew to 70 workers and an annual budget of \$3.2 million; and

Whereas, Oulahan died on May 9, 2008, at age 60 after suffering a brain aneurysm nearly three years ago that left him disabled and unable to continue the work that defined his life; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the assembly, That: the members of the Wisconsin assembly honor Richard Oulahan for his dedication and passion, and for tirelessly advocating for the poor in Milwaukee; and, be it further

Resolved, That the members of the Wisconsin assembly express their heartfelt sorrow and deepest sympathies to the family, friends, and colleagues of Richard Oulahan; and, be it further

Resolved, That the assembly chief clerk shall provide a copy of this resolution to Richard Oulahan’s life partner, Eloisa Gomez, and two sons, Cain and Luke Oulahan, and Marilyn Weiland, mother of his children and former spouse.

State Capitol
Madison, Wisconsin

Representative Michael D. Huebsch
Speaker of the Assembly

Date

Patrick E. Fuller
Assembly Chief Clerk