



# *P r o c l a m a t i o n*

## *Gloria Esther Betancourt*

### *April 13, 2021*

- WHEREAS,** Gloria Esther Betancourt was born in Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico and, in 1962, immigrated with her family to California, settling in Watsonville; and
- WHEREAS,** as a teenager Gloria worked in the canneries, and spent several years with Watsonville Canning, while raising her four children, Gidget, Gina, Frank and Richard; and
- WHEREAS,** in 1985, Watsonville Canning's workers were forced out on strike due to the company's 40% wage reduction and drastic cuts to both health benefits and union rights; and
- WHEREAS,** the Strikers' Committee was then formed during a meeting of 500 workers and Gloria was elected to serve as president; and
- WHEREAS,** Gloria soon became known as a passionate and dynamic speaker, traveling throughout the state and country, gaining support and working with committees to raise money and food donations; and
- WHEREAS,** Gloria and the strikers stood firm for 18 months, during which time not a single person crossed the picket line; and
- WHEREAS,** the heroism of the mostly women strikers inspired people throughout the nation, including Reverend Jesse Jackson, who recognized the importance of their fight for economic justice; and
- WHEREAS,** on March 11, 1987, by a vote of 543 to 21, the workers ratified a new contract, which they, along with Gloria, celebrated as a victory after a year and a half of hard work; and
- WHEREAS,** Gloria also served as the leader of Fiestas Patrias, organizing citywide cultural festivals and volunteered at the local senior center for many years; and
- WHEREAS,** Gloria inspired and supported people, greeting them with warmth, joy, love and generosity, sharing her knowledge and listening to all who reached out to her; and
- WHEREAS,** Gloria cherished her family, spending time with her children, eight grandchildren and two great-grandsons.

**NOW, THEREFORE,** I, Jimmy Dutra, Mayor of the City of Watsonville, in the State of California, on behalf of the City Council hereby recognize, honor and express appreciation for Gloria Esther Betancourt, whose life was an example of true leadership, dedication, caring and love for the betterment of all people, and convey our deepest sympathies for her passing.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Watsonville to be affixed this 13<sup>th</sup> day of April, Two thousand and twenty one.

  
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**Jimmy Dutra, Mayor**

**WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA**

