SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 53

WHEREAS, The Waco Veterans Affairs Hospital serves every county in Texas and is the only Veterans Affairs hospital in the state that provides psychiatric care as its principal function; and

WHEREAS, The federal government has invested significantly in the Waco Veterans Affairs Hospital, spending $12.4 million to enhance a facility for acute psychiatric care and $11.3 million to renovate and modernize a psychiatric-geriatric building; and

WHEREAS, State government also invested in the hospital by locating a Texas Veterans Commission regional office near the facility to provide integrated services to the large concentration of veterans in the area; and

WHEREAS, Operating 15 rehabilitation beds to serve blind veterans, the Waco Veterans Affairs Hospital is known as a national referral facility for blind rehabilitation; and

WHEREAS, In the past year alone, the hospital treated 1,800 psychiatric, posttraumatic stress disorder, and blind rehabilitation patients, plus another 17,000 outpatients for medical and psychiatric conditions, attesting to its importance to Texas veterans throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, Enjoying strong community support, the Waco Veterans Affairs Hospital annually contributes an estimated $203 million to the local economy and directly and indirectly accounts for approximately 2,000 jobs throughout Central Texas; and

WHEREAS, A Veterans Affairs proposal to close the Waco facility would interrupt the seamless delivery of services to many Texas veterans and do great harm to the local economy; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 78th Legislature, 3rd Called Session, hereby oppose any proposal to close the Waco Veterans Affairs Hospital and urge concerned Texans and veterans to attend related hearings to lend their support for the hospital and its retention.

Averitt

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President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on September 25, 2003.

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Secretary of the Senate

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Member, Texas Senate