

By: Carona

S.C.R. No. 8

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, NorthSTAR is an integrated managed care program that
2 combines federal, state, and local funding to operate a single
3 system of behavioral health, chemical dependency, and mental health
4 services for Medicaid recipients and medically indigent
5 individuals of Dallas and the surrounding counties of Collin,
6 Ellis, Hunt, Kaufman, Navarro, and Rockwall; and

7 WHEREAS, This pilot initiative, implemented in July 1999, is
8 a result of collaboration among the Texas Department of Mental
9 Health and Mental Retardation, the Texas Commission on Alcohol and
10 Drug Abuse, the Texas Department of Health, the Texas Health and
11 Human Services Commission, and local governments; these entities
12 contract with a licensed behavioral health organization, which is
13 responsible for managing and ensuring appropriate care through a
14 network of behavioral health providers; and

15 WHEREAS, Since it became operational, approximately 200,000
16 individuals have been enrolled in the NorthSTAR program, and
17 preliminary data and reports suggest several positive results; for
18 example, certain barriers to access and waiting lists for health
19 care services have been reduced or eliminated, and more low-income
20 individuals are receiving services and reporting positively about
21 their experiences; and

22 WHEREAS, These improvements in the delivery of services are
23 partly attributable to an increase in the number of enrolled
24 providers that have become available through the program, with the

1 expanded provider base affording more choices and greater
2 convenience; given the overall benefit to the community, the
3 NorthSTAR pilot program has demonstrated considerable potential
4 for continued success and therefore merits continuation and further
5 evaluation; now, therefore, be it

6 RESOLVED, That the 78th Legislature of the State of Texas
7 hereby urge the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental
8 Retardation and the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse to
9 continue the NorthSTAR initiative in Dallas and surrounding
10 counties, with expansion of the program contingent on legislative
11 approval and a thorough evaluation of the program's treatment and
12 cost-effectiveness; and, be it further

13 RESOLVED, That the secretary of state forward an official
14 copy of this resolution to the commissioner of the Texas Department
15 of Mental Health and Mental Retardation and to the chair of the
16 Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse.