

By: Crownover

H.R. No. 338

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Organizations and individuals that come to the aid
2 of others in a time of need exemplify the noblest qualities of the
3 human spirit; and

4 WHEREAS, The Quality Inn of Denton housed more than 800
5 people in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, letting
6 evacuees' immediate needs take precedence over usual business
7 concerns; and

8 WHEREAS, Stepping into the breach as soon as the crisis in New
9 Orleans became evident, the senior staff at Choice Hotels (the
10 parent company of the Quality Inn franchise) and Shivom Hotels
11 (owner of the Denton property) opened the Denton Quality Inn to
12 those fleeing Hurricane Katrina; though parts of the property had
13 previously been closed for renovation, the staff worked feverishly
14 to make all rooms available for the evacuees and underwrote all
15 necessary expenses to meet that goal; and

16 WHEREAS, Senior staff associated with the Quality Inn did an
17 exceptional job of meeting the demands of this high-pressure
18 situation; key organizers at the outset were Cara Leising of the
19 consulting firm, NHM, Inc., and hotel general manager, Viral
20 Thakkar; their efforts were matched by the rest of the staff in
21 Denton and by a group of volunteers from the Quality Inn in Glen
22 Rose, all of whom invested significant time and effort to create a
23 safe, family-friendly haven for the storm victims; and

24 WHEREAS, The assistance offered at the Quality Inn quickly

1 became a community effort; the area's religious institutions,
2 coordinated through Interfaith Ministries of Denton, were
3 instrumental in keeping the hotel relief effort operating smoothly;
4 no fewer than 37 churches contributed to the cause, with several
5 places of worship deserving special recognition: Singing Oaks
6 Church of Christ, which coordinated the overall operation and
7 distributed food and clothing to meet the immediate needs of the
8 evacuees, Immaculate Conception Catholic Church and Saint Mark
9 Catholic Church, which combined forces to direct the computer
10 center that was set up in the hotel to assist the storm victims, and
11 First Christian Church, which established and staffed the
12 "mini-mall" that provided clothing, medicine, household goods, and
13 other items, all at no charge; and

14 WHEREAS, The outpouring of compassion and assistance from the
15 residents of the Denton area was truly stunning; among those who
16 gave of their time and resources were Cumberland Children's Home,
17 the City of Denton, the Denton Benefit League, the Denton
18 Convention and Visitor Bureau, county judge Mary Horn of Denton
19 County, Denton High School cosmetology students, the Denton Vintage
20 Jazz Society, the Denton Kiwanis Club, Eagle Transmission, Geeks on
21 Wheels, the Greater Denton Arts Council, Home Depot, Maids of
22 America, McBride Music and Pawn Shop, Morrison Mills, Robson Ranch
23 retirement community, Sally Beauty Supply, the Texas Woman's
24 University Dental Hygiene Program, United Way of Denton County, the
25 University of North Texas, Denton Housing Authority, McDonald's,
26 Burger King, Denton ISD, Denton Sheriff's Department, Denton Police
27 Department, Denton SPCA, Denton Chiropractic Association, WIC,

1 Veterans Administration, Candy Haven, Texas Workforce Commission,
2 Angel Flight, Wells Fargo, Denton County Health Department,
3 Brunswick Bowling Alley, and more; and

4 WHEREAS, This caring coalition worked together to provide the
5 storm victims with as many of the comforts of home as possible,
6 while also seeing that essential services such as medical care and
7 education were made available; a study hall staffed by tutors was
8 established in the hotel, and volunteers assisted children in
9 adjusting to their new schools; moreover, all of these services
10 were continued for more than three months after Katrina struck,
11 during which time evacuees from Hurricane Rita arrived at the hotel
12 and received the same warm welcome; and

13 WHEREAS, In the midst of so much sadness and destruction, the
14 Quality Inn became an inspiring refuge that in many ways, large and
15 small, helped the victims of the natural disasters to begin the
16 process of recovery; though it was never designated an official
17 hurricane shelter, the hotel became the proverbial "shelter from
18 the storm" for hundreds of Americans in dire circumstances, and the
19 help rendered to them by the hotel employees and the fine citizens
20 of Denton is an inspiration to us all; now, therefore, be it

21 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 79th Texas
22 Legislature, 3rd Called Session, hereby honor the management and
23 staff of the Quality Inn of Denton and all of the other individuals
24 and organizations in that community who assisted victims of
25 Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and extend to them sincere praise for a
26 job well done; and, be it further

27 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be

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1 prepared for hotel personnel as an expression of high regard by the
2 Texas House of Representatives.