

By: Dukes

H.R. No. 1660

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The people of Austin and Travis County have lost a
2 highly respected health activist with the passing of Marc Thomas,
3 founder and CEO of the Sickle Cell Association of Austin--Marc
4 Thomas Chapter, at the age of 46; and

5 WHEREAS, Born in Oakland, California, on May 17, 1958, Mr.
6 Thomas was diagnosed with sickle cell disease at the age of three; a
7 hereditary blood disorder for which there is no universal cure,
8 this condition causes a malformation of red blood cells that leads
9 to the blockage of tiny blood vessels, causing excruciating pain
10 and lack of oxygen and resulting in damage to organs; one in 12
11 African Americans carries the sickle cell trait, and it is
12 estimated that more than 70,000 Americans have sickle cell disease;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, Mr. Thomas held several management positions with
15 National Refractories and Minerals Corporation and with Siemens
16 Corporation in California before moving to Austin; after relocating
17 to the capital city, he found that support for those dealing with
18 sickle cell disease was inadequate and that awareness and education
19 concerning the illness was minimal; consequently, in 1997, he
20 founded a local affiliate of the Sickle Cell Disease Association of
21 America, Inc.; and

22 WHEREAS, Leaving his corporate career, Marc Thomas devoted
23 himself to the work of the Austin chapter, which promotes
24 understanding of sickle cell disease while providing support and

1 assistance to persons and families affected by the illness; to
2 date, the chapter has helped more than 500 families through its
3 services and reached more than 10,000 people through its education
4 outreach; and

5 WHEREAS, Though chronically ill himself, Mr. Thomas spent
6 countless hours on such efforts as raising awareness of sickle cell
7 disease; conducting home and hospital visits; providing medical,
8 rehabilitative, and social service referrals; assisting with group
9 meetings and caregiver-support meetings; providing hydration
10 services; and working to improve communication between health
11 professionals and clients; and

12 WHEREAS, In 2003, Mr. Thomas was awarded the Ray of Hope Award
13 by Community Health Charities for his outstanding community
14 service, and in 2004 he joined the Austin postmaster in unveiling
15 the new sickle cell stamp of the U.S. Postal Service; not long
16 before his death, he was appointed to the U.S. Department of Health
17 and Human Services Advisory Board; and

18 WHEREAS, Sustained by a deep and abiding faith, Mr. Thomas
19 was a pastor of the Foundation of God Ministry in Austin; and

20 WHEREAS, The fervent dedication and profound compassion that
21 Marc Thomas brought to his community endeavors has left a priceless
22 and inspiring legacy, and his memory will be forever cherished by
23 those who were privileged to share in his love and friendship; now,
24 therefore, be it

25 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 79th Texas
26 Legislature hereby pay special tribute to the life of Marc Thomas
27 and recognize May 17, 2005, as Marc Thomas Day; and, be it further

1 RESOLVED, That the Texas House of Representatives extend
2 sincere sympathy to the family of this beloved gentleman: to his
3 wife, Linda; to his children, Marc, De'drienne, and Alysian; to his
4 grandson, Jae'len; and to his other relatives and many friends;
5 and, be it further

6 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
7 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of
8 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Marc
9 Thomas.