

By: Hamilton

H.R. No. 531

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Radio station KOGT-AM demonstrated exemplary
2 commitment to the city of Orange and its environs during Hurricane
3 Rita, and its outstanding service throughout this devastating
4 ordeal serves to underscore why the station has been a mainstay of
5 the community for nearly six decades; and

6 WHEREAS, The station first hit the airwaves on January 16,
7 1948, with broadcasts of local news, a Stark High School basketball
8 game, recordings by Bing Crosby, and organ music; and

9 WHEREAS, Since 1961, the station has played classic country
10 music, but through several owners, it has continued to be the voice
11 of Orange, covering such significant news stories as Hurricanes
12 Audrey and Rita, the disastrous fire in downtown Orange in the early
13 1960s, and back-to-back state football championships in 1986 and
14 1987; the station still provides live broadcasts of local high
15 school sporting events, and KOGT and its website remain a primary
16 source for local news; and

17 WHEREAS, Current owner Gary Stelly bought the station in 1992
18 and has since replaced equipment and doubled the size of the staff,
19 which includes veteran announcer Richard Corder, who has worked at
20 the station since 1955; readers of the *Orange Leader* are
21 representative of its loyal fan base, having lauded KOGT with best
22 radio station, best news media, and best sportscaster honors each
23 year for more than a decade; and

24 WHEREAS, During Hurricane Rita, KOGT was an essential

1 lifeline to Orange residents, providing necessary information
2 before the storm, and after, through its website; with the
3 assistance of Wayne Reeh and Matt Arnold, Mr. Stelly was able to
4 keep the website up and running on generator power, providing news
5 and photos of the storm's damage and recovery efforts; the website,
6 KOGT.com, received as many as 15,000 hits a day, as well as e-mails
7 and phone calls from over 30 states; and

8 WHEREAS, The owner and staff of KOGT underscored their
9 ongoing commitment to the community by performing above and beyond
10 the call of duty in the aftermath of Hurricane Rita; Mr. Stelly was
11 recognized for his efforts when he was named the Greater Orange Area
12 Chamber of Commerce 2005 Citizen of the Year, an honor for which he
13 has shared credit with his hardworking and dedicated staff; now,
14 therefore, be it

15 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 80th Texas
16 Legislature hereby commend Gary Stelly and the staff of KOGT in
17 Orange for their exceptional service to their community during
18 Hurricane Rita and express best wishes to all those involved for
19 their continued success; and, be it further

20 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
21 prepared for Mr. Stelly and the staff of KOGT as an expression of
22 high regard by the Texas House of Representatives.