

1-1 By: Averitt S.C.R. No. 46
1-2 (In the Senate - Filed March 20, 2007; March 27, 2007, read
1-3 first time and referred to Committee on Veteran Affairs and
1-4 Military Installations; April 10, 2007, reported favorably by the
1-5 following vote: Yeas 3, Nays 0; April 10, 2007, sent to printer.)

1-6 SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1-7 WHEREAS, The Thomas T. Connally Department of Veterans
1-8 Affairs Medical Center was a fundamental part of the City of Marlin,
1-9 Texas, for more than 50 years, and its recent closure dealt a
1-10 significant blow to the community and surrounding area; and

1-11 WHEREAS, Beginning in 1943, the citizens of Marlin organized
1-12 a campaign to secure their city as the location for a proposed naval
1-13 medical facility; initially, 31 individual contributors donated
1-14 \$2,025 to finance their preliminary effort, and two years later,
1-15 the city raised an additional \$25,000 in small contributions from
1-16 the local citizenry to purchase 150 acres of land for a new naval
1-17 hospital; and

1-18 WHEREAS, Although Marlin's selection as the site for the
1-19 hospital had been announced in 1944, and the order approving
1-20 construction of the new 500-bed facility was signed by President
1-21 Harry S. Truman on July 1, 1945, congressional funding for the
1-22 project was omitted from appropriations legislation later that
1-23 year; and

1-24 WHEREAS, Undeterred, the residents focused on attracting a
1-25 200-bed Veterans Administration general and surgical hospital and
1-26 collected additional funds for the purchase of eight acres to
1-27 donate for the facility; the city's efforts came to fruition when
1-28 the Marlin Veterans Administration Hospital opened on November 1,
1-29 1950, with a staff of 14 physicians, 42 nurses, and two dentists;
1-30 during its 50 years of operation, the hospital provided hundreds of
1-31 jobs to area residents, continuing to reward the community's early
1-32 faith and determination; and

1-33 WHEREAS, In 1992, the facility was renamed the Thomas T.
1-34 Connally Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center after United
1-35 States Senator Connally, who championed the city's efforts to have
1-36 the hospital located in Marlin; regrettably, the medical center has
1-37 since been closed by the United States Department of Veterans
1-38 Affairs, and there currently are no plans for its reuse despite a
1-39 recent extensive remodeling; and

1-40 WHEREAS, Although the center's closure was a major economic
1-41 loss to the residents of Marlin, the city's spirit and goodwill have
1-42 yet to waver; in the aftermath of Hurricanes Rita and Katrina,
1-43 Marlin opened the Connally Veterans Administration Medical Center
1-44 to house medically fragile evacuees from the affected areas, but,
1-45 with that notable exception, the complex has sat empty and will
1-46 likely be razed if a permanent use for the center cannot be found;
1-47 and

1-48 WHEREAS, Fortunately, the Connally Veterans Administration
1-49 Medical Center facilities can be easily converted for a number of
1-50 uses by the state, presenting a practical and beneficial use for the
1-51 idle buildings; precedent for the adaptation of a Veterans
1-52 Administration facility to state use was established in 2001 when
1-53 the United States Congress authorized the conveyance, without
1-54 consideration, of all real property and improvements associated
1-55 with the Fort Lyon Veterans Administration Medical Center in Las
1-56 Animas, Colorado, to the state of Colorado; and

1-57 WHEREAS, Elected officials from Falls County and the City of
1-58 Marlin, as well as many civic leaders, have expressed their support
1-59 for the reuse of the Connally Veterans Administration Medical
1-60 Center, and given the City of Marlin's long history with the site
1-61 and the fact that it would cost more to destroy the center than to
1-62 convey the facility to the State of Texas, it is only fitting that
1-63 the state take advantage of this available resource; now,
1-64 therefore, be it

2-1 RESOLVED, That the 80th Legislature of the State of Texas
2-2 hereby respectfully request the Congress of the United States to
2-3 authorize the secretary of the United States Department of Veterans
2-4 Affairs to convey the Thomas T. Connally Department of Veterans
2-5 Affairs Medical Center located in Marlin, Texas, to the State of
2-6 Texas; and, be it further

2-7 RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward official
2-8 copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, to
2-9 the speaker of the house of representatives and the president of the
2-10 senate of the United States Congress, to all members of the Texas
2-11 delegation to the congress, and to the secretary of the United
2-12 States Department of Veterans Affairs with the request that this
2-13 resolution be officially entered in the Congressional Record as a
2-14 memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.

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