

**SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 196**

**WHEREAS**, The Senate of the State of Texas is proud to welcome members of the Texas Organization of Rural and Community Hospitals, also known as TORCH, on their visit to the Capitol on February 14, 2007; and

**WHEREAS**, Established in 1990, TORCH is now in its 16th year and has become known as the voice that speaks for the rural and community hospitals of Texas and as a model for rural health-care organizations across the nation; and

**WHEREAS**, The passing of its former founder and longtime president and chief executive officer, John F. Boff, on July 22, 2006, was met with great sorrow by the members and partners of this proud and prestigious organization; and

**WHEREAS**, Through its grassroots, dynamic, and collaborative work ethic, TORCH has helped small community hospitals and remote rural hospitals survive in an economic and regulatory environment that has become increasingly challenging; and

**WHEREAS**, Of the 254 counties in Texas, 177 are considered rural; of these counties, 50 have no hospital and 99 have one hospital; 177 counties are designated as medically underserved and 112 Texas counties have been designated as health professional shortage areas; in addition, 46 counties have been designated as partial shortage areas; and

**WHEREAS**, Over three million Texans rely on rural hospitals to provide access to high-quality medical care; TORCH is a source

of support for these hospitals, which are challenged with providing care for a growing number of uninsured families, dealing with higher costs and lower reimbursements, keeping pace with technology and capital improvements, and recruiting and retaining highly qualified health-care professionals; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 80th Legislature, hereby welcome the members of the Texas Organization of Rural and Community Hospitals to the Capitol and commend all those associated with this valuable organization for their work on behalf of the Lone Star State's rural and community hospitals; and, be it further

**RESOLVED**, That a copy of this Resolution be prepared in their honor.

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President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on February 14, 2007.

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Secretary of the Senate

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Member, Texas Senate