

By: Craddick

H.R. No. 207

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The life and legacy of an outstanding physician and
2 community leader were recognized with the dedication of the Viola
3 M. Coleman Family Medicine Clinic in Midland on August 15, 2008; and

4 WHEREAS, Dr. Coleman was born in New Iberia, Louisiana, on
5 September 25, 1919; she earned her bachelor's degree in education
6 from Southern University in 1939 and her medical degree from
7 Meharry Medical College 10 years later; after interning in New
8 York, she settled in Midland with her husband, Raymond, and
9 established a practice in 1951; and

10 WHEREAS, This pioneering African American doctor resolved to
11 address the problem of racial segregation in her new community by
12 opening her waiting room to patients of all races; she went on to
13 play a critical role in the desegregation of Midland's hospital,
14 restaurants, and public schools; a strong advocate for minority
15 students, she helped initiate a Head Start program and worked to
16 improve high school graduation rates; and

17 WHEREAS, Over the course of a distinguished career, Dr.
18 Coleman served as medical chief of staff at Midland Memorial
19 Hospital (MMH) and was instrumental in the creation of an emergency
20 medical technician program at Midland College; she continued to
21 maintain her private practice until 1998, when MMH bought her
22 office and established a community clinic there; not yet ready to
23 retire, she joined the clinic staff and went on seeing patients
24 until she was 85; in recognition of her civic leadership and

1 exceptional achievements, she was accorded the Thomas Jefferson
2 Award for Public Service, and the Viola M. Coleman High School in
3 Midland was named in her honor; and

4 WHEREAS, Administered by Midland Community Healthcare
5 Services, the clinic in which Dr. Coleman practiced and which now
6 bears her name has undergone extensive renovation in order to
7 better serve the people of Midland and the surrounding area; the
8 Coleman Clinic provides high-quality medical treatment on a
9 sliding-fee scale and offers such services as preventive health
10 care, annual checkups, dental care, and management of chronic
11 illnesses, as well as access to health education, financial
12 counseling, and social services; and

13 WHEREAS, For more than 50 years, Dr. Viola Coleman set an
14 inspiring example of civic engagement, compassion for others, and
15 commitment to the highest standards of her profession, and it is
16 indeed fitting that this outstanding medical facility should pay
17 tribute to her memory; now, therefore, be it

18 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 81st Texas
19 Legislature hereby commemorate the dedication of the Viola M.
20 Coleman Family Medicine Clinic in Midland; and, be it further

21 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
22 prepared for the staff of the clinic as an expression of high regard
23 by the Texas House of Representatives.