

By: Edwards

H.R. No. 2616

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Rabbi Samuel E. Karff of Houston has enriched the
2 lives of many through his scholarship, his compassion, and his
3 commitment to the spiritual dimension of healing; and

4 WHEREAS, A magna cum laude graduate of Harvard University,
5 Rabbi Karff was ordained at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute
6 of Religion, where he earned a doctor of Hebrew letters degree in
7 rabbinic theology in 1956; he served as an Air Force chaplain and
8 led congregations in a number of cities across the country before
9 becoming senior rabbi of Congregation Beth Israel in Houston in
10 1975; for more than two decades, his radio show has drawn listeners
11 of all faiths; and

12 WHEREAS, Rabbi Karff has served as the editor of *The Journal*
13 *of Reform Judaism* and is the author of such books as *The Soul of the*
14 *Rav, Agada: The Language of Jewish Faith*, and *Permission to*
15 *Believe: Finding Faith in Troubled Times*, which was published by
16 the Abingdon Press in 2005; moreover, he wrote the chapters on
17 Judaism for *Religions of the World*, a textbook used by some 200
18 colleges, and has taught at Notre Dame University and the
19 University of Chicago Divinity School; he was a lecturer in the
20 Department of Religious Studies at Rice University from 1977 to
21 2001; and

22 WHEREAS, Drawing from his own experiences as a hospital
23 patient, Rabbi Karff developed the Sacred Vocation Program to
24 create enduring, beneficial changes in health care by helping

1 caregivers understand the emotional and spiritual aspects of
2 healing and find greater purpose in their work; the pilot project at
3 St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital became the Sacred Vocation
4 Partnership, a collaboration between St. Luke's and The University
5 of Texas Health Science Center at Houston; the program has since
6 been instituted at Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas and
7 two clinics in Houston, and is currently scheduled to be
8 implemented in three additional health care facilities; and

9 WHEREAS, Rabbi Karff accepted emeritus status at
10 Congregation Beth Israel in 1999; he became founder and director of
11 the Health and Human Spirit Program at the Health Science Center,
12 which in 2004 was expanded into the newly formed McGovern Center,
13 and Rabbi Karff currently serves as its associate director and as a
14 visiting professor in the Department of Family Medicine at the
15 Health Science Center; he is also on the board of the Texas Medical
16 Center Houston and lectures extensively in this country and abroad;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, A former president of the Central Conference of
19 American Rabbis, Rabbi Karff serves on the boards of the Institute
20 of Religion, the Coalition for Mutual Respect, and the
21 Anti-Defamation League, and is a former member of the executive
22 committee and the board of trustees of the United Way of the Texas
23 Gulf Coast; and

24 WHEREAS, This eminent scholar and religious leader has been a
25 source of profound inspiration through his dedication to nourishing
26 the human spirit and to illuminating the connection between
27 physical, emotional, and spiritual healing; now, therefore, be it

1 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 81st Texas
2 Legislature hereby honor Rabbi Samuel E. Karff for his remarkable
3 contributions and extend to him sincere best wishes for continued
4 success in his endeavors; and, be it further

5 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
6 prepared for Rabbi Karff as an expression of high regard by the
7 Texas House of Representatives.