

By: Isaac

H.R. No. 195

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Elissa Benford has exemplified the finest qualities
2 of public service for the past 20 years, and though her retirement
3 from the Texas Legislative Council on January 31, 2011, brings to a
4 close her work in state government, she will continue her work in
5 the community, where she has already made a lasting difference in
6 the lives of countless individuals; and

7 WHEREAS, A former banking executive, Lisa Benford joined the
8 TLC in 1990 as a redistricting analyst and today holds the post of
9 research specialist; her myriad duties have included tracking and
10 processing election data, training new employees, and serving as a
11 council liaison to the office of the Texas secretary of state and to
12 county election officials; in each of these areas, Lisa has earned
13 the respect and admiration of many for her knowledge, skill, and
14 exceptional dedication to customer service; and

15 WHEREAS, Lisa has helped innumerable Texans outside the
16 workplace as well through her philanthropic endeavors; in 1996, she
17 founded Lisa's H.O.P.E. Chest, and the nonprofit has since provided
18 business attire and other assistance to thousands of area residents
19 transitioning to employment; in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, she
20 was contacted by the Austin Police Department to help organize
21 donations, and over the course of six weeks, Lisa and others
22 distributed seven airplane hangars' worth of supplies to some 8,000
23 evacuees; she has carried out a number of significant community
24 projects in her native Rockdale, too, such as the establishment of a

1 home-ownership program and the purchase and restoration of the
2 town's oldest African American residence, which now hosts civic
3 events and offers accommodations to visiting families; Lisa was
4 also instrumental in securing funds to establish a park in the
5 town's African American community; and

6 WHEREAS, Lisa was honored with a Daily Point of Light Award
7 for all she has done to help people rebuild their lives, and in 2009
8 she was invited to a special forum with Presidents George H. W. Bush
9 and Barack Obama that celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Point
10 of Light program; the many other accolades bestowed on her include
11 the Outstanding Community Involvement Award from the State Agency
12 Council of the Office of the Governor, the Humanitarian and
13 Volunteer of the Year Awards from the Texas Department of Health and
14 Human Services, the Volunteer of the Year Award from the Austin Area
15 Urban League, and a Five Who Care Award from television station
16 KVUE; and

17 WHEREAS, Now poised to begin a new chapter in her life, Lisa
18 is busy charting goals for the future; her plans include
19 transforming the old Aycock High School in Rockdale into a
20 community center and teaching classes in healthy cooking to area
21 children; and

22 WHEREAS, In all her endeavors, Lisa enjoys the love and
23 support of her husband of 32 years, Thurman Benford, her children,
24 Lucretia, Sedria, and Mark, and her grandchildren, Farrah, Brierra,
25 Braxton, Paris, Makala, Rachael, Zophia, Mark, and Anehi; and

26 WHEREAS, Lisa's coworkers at the council will sorely miss her
27 cheerful smile and can-do spirit, but their dismay at her departure

1 is somewhat tempered by the knowledge that if she can accomplish so
2 much toward the greater good while working full-time, her capacity
3 to change lives for the better is about to be magnified a hundred
4 times over; seldom has any retirement held such rich and joyous
5 promise; now, therefore, be it

6 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 82nd Texas
7 Legislature hereby honor Lisa Benford for her exemplary service to
8 the people of the Lone Star State on the occasion of her retirement
9 from the Texas Legislative Council and extend to her sincere best
10 wishes for all the happiness and good fortune she so richly
11 deserves; and, be it further

12 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
13 prepared for Ms. Benford as an expression of high regard by the
14 Texas House of Representatives.