

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 90

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

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

WHEREAS, Lisa has helped innumerable Texans outside the workplace as well through her philanthropic endeavors; in 1996, she founded Lisa's H.O.P.E. Chest, and the nonprofit has since provided business attire and other assistance to thousands of area residents transitioning to employment; in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, she was contacted by the Austin Police Department to help organize donations, and over the course of six weeks, Lisa and others distributed seven airplane hangars' worth of supplies to some 8,000 evacuees; she has carried out a number of significant community projects in her native Rockdale, too, such as the establishment of a home-ownership program and the purchase and restoration of the town's oldest African American residence, which now hosts civic events and offers accommodations to visiting families; Lisa was also instrumental in securing funds to establish a park in the town's African American community; and

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

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

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

WHEREAS, Lisa's coworkers at the council will sorely miss her cheerful smile and can-do spirit, but their dismay at her departure is somewhat tempered by the knowledge that if she can accomplish so much toward the greater good while working full-time, her capacity to change lives for the better is about to be magnified a hundred times over; seldom has any retirement held such rich and joyous promise; now, therefore, be it

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

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this Resolution be prepared for Lisa Benford as an expression of high regard from the Texas Senate.

Ogden

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the
above Resolution was adopted by
the Senate on January 26, 2011.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate