

By: Smith

H.R. No. 395

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Helen Smith of Baytown is an innovative entrepreneur
2 and an inspiring role model for women; and

3 WHEREAS, Mrs. Smith's success story began in the early 1980s,
4 when she was a single mother of three and had recently lost her job;
5 struggling to provide for her children, she took a risk and created
6 a professional opportunity for herself; because she had always
7 liked to bake, she approached five local restaurants, asking them
8 to include her homemade pies on their menus until she could find
9 employment; soon thereafter, Mrs. Smith was overwhelmed by
10 enthusiastic pastry lovers who wanted to place their own personal
11 orders for her pies; and

12 WHEREAS, To keep up with the demand, Mrs. Smith purchased a
13 second oven at a garage sale and began waking at 3 a.m. to bake pies,
14 which she then carefully packed into her car to deliver around town;
15 though she temporarily slowed down when she took on a position as a
16 secretary for Texaco for four years, she never lost sight of her
17 culinary and entrepreneurial aspirations; and

18 WHEREAS, With the support of her family and friends and
19 advice from the Lee College Small Business Assistance Center,
20 Mrs. Smith applied for a small business loan; when her application
21 was approved, she rented and renovated a small building, and on the
22 opening day of Helen's Kitchen, a line of customers gathered
23 outside the front door; sales surpassed more than \$100,000 that
24 first year, and soon Baytown's Pie Lady, as she was newly nicknamed,

1 moved into a larger space and hired employees to keep up with the
2 demand for as many as 200 pies a day; and

3 WHEREAS, Mrs. Smith made another savvy business decision
4 when she approached area grocery stores to see if they were
5 interested in selling her frozen, cholesterol-free pie shells; they
6 agreed, and shortly after, her homemade crusts graced the shelves
7 of small stores throughout Baytown, and then larger chain grocery
8 stores across Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi; her pie shells can
9 now be found at Sam's Clubs across the country; and

10 WHEREAS, In 1988, the United States Small Business
11 Administration named Mrs. Smith the "Woman Advocate of the Year" in
12 Texas; as a result of this honor, she began receiving requests to
13 visit seminars across the country; in the fall of 2011, she gained
14 national attention when she was invited to appear on *Good Morning*
15 *America* to share a new pie she invented; inspired by President
16 Obama's two favorite kinds of pie, sweet potato and pecan,
17 Mrs. Smith combined the two into one; the then 77-year-old, who had
18 never been to New York before, was featured in a segment with
19 renowned chef Emeril Lagasse; and

20 WHEREAS, Helen Smith's determination and creativity proved
21 to be a winning recipe for a flourishing business, and she may take
22 justifiable pride in the sweet success she has achieved; now,
23 therefore, be it

24 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 83rd Texas
25 Legislature hereby recognize Helen Smith for her dedication to
26 preserving the tradition of making pies from scratch and extend to
27 her sincere best wishes for continued success; and, be it further

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1 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
2 prepared for Mrs. Smith as an expression of high regard by the Texas
3 House of Representatives.