

By: Garcia Hernandez

H.R. No. 962

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The Defensive Line is a nonprofit organization
2 dedicated to suicide prevention, and the group's cofounder and
3 chief education officer, Martha Thomas, is visiting the Capitol on
4 May 1, 2025; and

5 WHEREAS, A resident of Coppell, Mrs. Thomas helped establish
6 The Defensive Line in 2021 after the tragic suicide of her
7 24-year-old daughter, Ella, in January 2018; cofounded with her
8 husband, Chris Thomas, and their son, Dallas Cowboys defensive
9 lineman Solomon Thomas, The Defensive Line seeks to end the
10 epidemic of youth suicide, especially for young people of color, by
11 transforming the way we communicate and connect about mental
12 health; and

13 WHEREAS, After working in education for more than 30 years,
14 Mrs. Thomas left teaching in 2022 to devote herself full-time to The
15 Defensive Line; drawing on her insights into the realities of the
16 classroom, she educates participants about suicide prevention
17 through the organization's workshops, which guide teachers and
18 leaders through the facts of youth suicide, particularly for people
19 of color, and prepare them to address mental health crises,
20 initiate difficult conversations, develop an action plan, and
21 create a safe environment; Mrs. Thomas has led programming
22 partnerships in the Dallas and Fort Worth Independent School
23 Districts and at Baylor University and Stanford University, and she
24 is a popular podcast guest and keynote speaker; she and her husband

1 serve as faculty members of the American Academy of Pediatrics and
2 are involved with Project ECHO, its telementoring program; and

3 WHEREAS, The Defensive Line has called much-needed attention
4 to the issue of youth suicide and to the actions that can be taken to
5 help save lives, and it is a pleasure to join in recognizing Martha
6 Thomas and her colleagues for their steadfast commitment to this
7 worthy cause; now, therefore, be it

8 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 89th Texas
9 Legislature hereby honor Martha Thomas and The Defensive Line for
10 their efforts to prevent youth suicide and extend to all those
11 affiliated with the organization sincere best wishes for continued
12 success with their important work; and, be it further

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