STATE OF TEXAS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Texas has a long and rich history regarding Texans with disabilities. In fact, one of the heroes of the Texas Revolution, Erastus "Deaf" Smith, was a disabled Texan. Smith, a scout who was considered to be "the Bravest of the Brave" by Colonel William Travis, destroyed Vince's Bridge during the Battle of San Jacinto, preventing the retreat of the Mexican army and helping Texas win its independence. Given the many contributions that Texans with disabilities have made to our state, their legacy is reflected in the names of eight Texas counties, and their achievements remind us all of the productive roles that people with disabilities have played and will continue to play in our state.

Texas government leaders have long recognized that inclusion of people with disabilities in public policy making, particularly regarding policies that affect Texans with disabilities, is in the best interest of the state. Texas and its citizens are recognized nationwide for playing an instrumental role in the foundation of disability law by developing, in 1983, The National Policy for Persons with Disabilities for Governor Bill Clements, which would eventually form the basis of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Governor Allan Shivers, in 1950, appointed the first Governor's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped (now the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities), whose mission is to further opportunities for people with disabilities to enjoy full and equal access to lives of independence, productivity and self-determination.

Public schools play a key role by providing instruction in disability history and in subjects regarding people with disabilities and the disability rights movement. Also, post-secondary educational institutions, state agencies and community organizations can and should help to promote awareness and understanding about the issues affecting Texans with disabilities.

During the 82nd Legislative Session in 2011, House Bill 3616 was passed, designating October as Persons with Disabilities History and Awareness Month. I encourage all Texans to observe this month by celebrating and promoting the accomplishments of Texans with disabilities and the historic role that Texas has played in supporting our disabled residents.

Therefore, I, Rick Perry, Governor of Texas, do hereby proclaim October 2011 to be

Persons with Disability History and Awareness Month

in Texas, and urge the appropriate recognition whereof.

In official recognition whereof,
I hereby affix my signature this the
25th day of September, 2011.

Rick Perry
Governor of Texas