

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 545

Commending the Pakistani American Community.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 10, 2006

Agreed to by the Senate, March 11, 2006

WHEREAS, when the Kashmir earthquake hit the northern regions of Pakistan on October 8, 2005, international, national, and local nongovernment organizations (NGOs) immediately began massive efforts to provide aid and relief, and it is through their continuing service and partnerships that projects have been implemented throughout the earthquake affected areas; and

WHEREAS, Junaid "Johnny" Bashir, community activist and member of the National Association of Pakistani Americans (NAPA), initiated a fundraising effort for Pakistani earthquake victims with the help of NAPA, the Al-Mustafa Foundation, MQM, PACC, and PABA; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the devastating earthquake, an estimated 87,000, and maybe as high as 100,000, people have died and 3.3 million people are left without homes; and

WHEREAS, Johnny Bashir, Rashid Gill, and Hasan Zaidi were responsible for organizing a relief camp headquarters at the Aabshar Restaurant in Springfield; and

WHEREAS, two containers of blankets, clothing, and other necessary supplies, as well as a truck load of supplies were sent by Air Cargo to Pakistani victims; and

WHEREAS, Johnny Bashir was responsible for organizing a fundraising dinner, which was held at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City in Arlington on November 6, 2005, and over \$100,000 was raised, which went towards purchasing blankets for the camp from India, tents from China and money for two ambulances; and

WHEREAS, individuals who made valuable contributions to the fundraising event were Johnny Bashir, Saleem Khan, Rashid Gill, Ibad-Ur-Rehman, Mohammed Akbar, Hassan Zaidi, Kauser Javed, Dr. Zafar Iqbal Noori, Moshen Bashir, Abdul Khaliq, Sheikh Siddique, Hanif Akhtar, Zia Hasan, Hafiz Habibullah, Majid Sahi, Sonia Riaz, Sumaira Abbasi, Umair Hassan, and Amer Siddiqui; and

WHEREAS, residents of the Washington, D.C., community also made generous contributions to the Pakistani earthquake relief effort; and

WHEREAS, Azar Abbasi and Farah Chohan, along with a large number of volunteers, spent long hours on weekends loading donations for shipment to Pakistan; and

WHEREAS, approximately 900 tents, 390 sleeping bags, 500 blanket boxes, and 400 jacket boxes were shipped on October 29, 2005, to the Rural Support Network in Pakistan and another shipment went in December 2005; and

WHEREAS, Pakistan International Airlines arranged for the containers to be shipped to Pakistan and the donated supplies were distributed to the victims by well-known and respected NGOs; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly commend and congratulate the Pakistani American Community on its extraordinary service on behalf of the Pakistani earthquake victims; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Pakistani American Community as an expression of the General Assembly's gratitude for its tremendous humanitarian efforts.

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