



**DADE PHELAN**  
★  
TEXAS STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
DISTRICT 21

Tuesday, September 12, 2017

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Dade Phelan and I am a member of the Texas House of Representatives, which includes both Orange and Jefferson counties. I am writing this letter both as a State Representative and as a citizen of Southeast Texas.

The destruction caused by Hurricane Harvey is unprecedented and catastrophic. Fifty-two inches of rain fell on Orange and Jefferson counties over three days. The subsequent flooding left the region with limited access to necessary supplies and few options to have these goods delivered into areas of need. For several days Southeast Texas was a chain of islands with no means of ground transportation.

In our desperate time of need, PALS Sky Hope Disaster Relief Program delivered much needed relief by providing airlift support and provisions to our community. When immediate action was needed, they reacted quickly and without the red tape of other agencies. They worked in conjunction with military personnel and an army of volunteers on the ground making the operation seamless. In the following days over 150 flights were made to the Texas Gulf Coast most to my constituents. Over 200,000 pounds of critical supplies - MREs, water, hygiene products, sandwiches, medicine, fruit, cleaning supplies - were off loaded and distributed to those in need using high water vehicles, boats, dump trucks and helicopters.

The Sky Hope airlift to Orange and Jefferson counties provides an excellent example of how critical general aviation airports and airspace are in serving communities. This was a major humanitarian relief effort and should serve as a template for other rescue and recovery efforts going forward. Without the support of the Sky Hope Network and the hundreds of volunteers, the citizens of Orange and Jefferson Counties would have been completely cut off from lifesaving supplies for days. I have a stack of unused body bags because of Sky Hope's efforts.

The people of Orange and Jefferson counties are forever indebted to the PALS Sky Hope Disaster Relief Program and the hundreds of volunteers, pilots, and coordinators who were heroic in their efforts to provide relief to our devastated community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dade Phelan".

Dade Phelan

**Not Printed at State Expense**

P. O. BOX 2910 • AUSTIN, TEXAS 78768-2910 • 512-463-0706 • 512-463-1861 FAX  
DADE.PHELAN@HOUSE.TEXAS.GOV