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**Texas State Representative Lois Kolkhorst Tours  
Skilled Nursing Facility in Brenham  
Met with Caregivers and Elderly Residents  
to Discuss Long Term Care Issues Impacting Local Seniors**

*Texas Ranks 49<sup>th</sup> in the Nation in Medicaid Reimbursement; Brenham Rest Home Residents and Caregivers Ask Rep. Kolkhorst to Help Strengthen and Protect Texas' Strained Long Term Care System*

**Brenham, TX (August 19, 2008)** – In a facility tour and briefing today with Rep. Lois Kolkhorst (R- Dist 13) at Brenham Rest Home in Brenham, TX, front-line caregivers explained to their state legislator that adequate funding of the state's Medicaid rate is critical to providing quality care for Texas elderly, as the Texas' Medicaid rates for nursing homes ranks 49<sup>th</sup> in the nation.

According to recent Medicaid data, Texas seniors receive only \$106.59 on average per patient per day, while the national daily average is \$153.83 per patient. Caregivers explained that this difference, over time, can make a major impact in patient care programs and services.

"We appreciate Rep. Kolkhorst joining us today to meet our residents and staff, and to see first-hand how we can work together to improve Texas' standing in delivering quality long term care," said Kristi Lewis, Administrator for Brenham Rest Home in Brenham, TX. "Many citizens, including many of our policymakers in Austin, do not fully realize the dire funding situation facing long term care here in Texas and we hope to work with our state's political representatives to create additional care improvements and greater long-term security for our patients. Also important to note is that rural nursing homes, like Brenham Rest Home, frequently are the only resource for quality long term care to elderly residents in the community. Without Brenham Rest Home, our elderly residents and their family members who visit them would have to drive miles and miles from here."

"The time is now to start shaping the outlook for the 2009 state budget," said Rep. Kolkhorst, who is a member of the House Committee on Appropriations. "That's why I'm spending time learning about patient care at the Brenham Rest Home. We should be proud of the dedication

of our local long term caregivers who are dedicating their lives to our most fragile citizens. Texas seniors deserve the best care possible. I am hopeful that my fellow lawmakers will takes a thoughtful, sound approach to long term care policy. We need to address both quality of care and adequate funding because the issues go hand-in-hand.”

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