

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 141

BY SENATOR WOMACK

A RESOLUTION

To commend Concordia Parish Chief Deputy Fred Middleton on being named Deputy of the Year by the Louisiana Sheriffs' Association.

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Sheriffs' Association, under the leadership of President Sheriff Doug Hebert, and the Louisiana Sheriffs' Association Awards Committee, has chosen Chief Deputy Fred Middleton of the Concordia Parish Sheriff's Office to receive the esteemed Deputy of the Year Award; and

WHEREAS, the Deputy of the Year Award is designed to recognize a deputy sheriff who has demonstrated exceptional initiative and creativity in the execution of their duties and who has endeavored to enhance the quality of life in their community; and

WHEREAS, since taking the oath of office as Chief Deputy of the Concordia Parish Sheriff's Office in 2020, Fred Middleton has exemplified these qualities by implementing numerous programs aimed at supporting survivors of human trafficking, sexual assault, domestic violence, and child solicitation; and

WHEREAS, with the approval and support of Sheriff David Hedrick, Chief Deputy Middleton established a state-of-the-art Cyber Crime Unit (CCU) to enhance the investigative capabilities of the Concordia Parish Sheriff's Office against predators exploiting juveniles via the internet and online communications; and

WHEREAS, recognizing the significant financial investment required to develop the CCU, Chief Deputy Middleton partnered with the global nonprofit organization "Operation Underground Railroad", which assists law enforcement in combating child trafficking and exploitation; and

WHEREAS, the CCU has been instrumental in extracting critical evidence from various electronic devices using specialized, industry-recognized software, thus enabling detectives to expedite the analysis of computers, hard drives, thumb drives, cell phones, and other media storage devices, leading to the timely and accurate apprehension of criminals in Concordia Parish; and

WHEREAS, by 2022, the CCU had successfully resolved 400 cases within Concordia Parish and numerous others across the state, garnering the attention and recognition of the Community Foundation of Acadiana, which awarded the Concordia Parish Sheriff's Office the "Leaders in Law Enforcement Award", accompanied by a \$35,000 gift from the Brown Foundation to further support the CCU's operations; and

WHEREAS, Chief Deputy Middleton was pivotal in the establishment of the "Victim Advocate" position within the sheriff's office which serves as a liaison between the CCU and crime victims, and the creation of the "Community Justice Center" in 2022, which includes "Hope's Space", a soft interview room designed to provide a safe and comfortable environment for victims to share their stories and make decisions about their cases; and

WHEREAS, Chief Deputy Middleton's unwavering dedication to improving the quality of life in his community and his relentless efforts to enhance the CCU were further demonstrated by securing a \$70,000 Sub Grant from the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement for an online victim recovery program; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Sheriffs' Association is proud to honor Chief Deputy Fred Middleton as this year's Deputy of the Year in recognition of his outstanding service, leadership, and commitment to the safety and well-being of his community.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend Concordia Parish Chief Deputy Fred Middleton on being named Deputy of the Year by the Louisiana Sheriffs' Association.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Chief Deputy Fred Middleton.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE