

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 177

By Powers

A RESOLUTION to urge the naming of the Blue Springs Boat Ramp in Speedwell in honor of U.S. Army Staff Sergeant Terry William Prater.

WHEREAS, our nation was conceived by individuals who were willing to sacrifice their personal safety and concerns to ensure our individual and collective freedom, and the Volunteer State is especially proud to be the home of so many valiant men and women who have performed above and beyond the call of duty; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of Tennessee have, throughout the years, been called upon to take up arms against the enemies of this great nation, risking their lives and leaving their loved ones behind to honorably safeguard the freedoms and liberties guaranteed to all citizens of these United States and vanquishing those who threaten our way of life; and

WHEREAS, one such individual was U.S. Army Staff Sergeant Terry William Prater, who made the ultimate sacrifice for his country in the line of duty when he was killed in Iraq on March 15, 2007, at the age of twenty-five; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Terry Prater died along with four other soldiers when their vehicle struck an explosive; they were assigned to the 1st Squadron, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas. Staff Sergeant Prater was on his second deployment in Iraq; and

WHEREAS, the son of Cheryl Hurley and Terry Darrell Prater, Terry Prater was born in Kentucky on August 13, 1981; he grew up in Floyd County, Kentucky, before moving with his mother to Claiborne County, where he graduated from Powell Valley High School in 1999; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Prater hunted deer and turkey, but his true love was fishing; he was a member of Centex Bass Hunters and especially enjoyed fishing off of the Blue Springs Boat Ramp at Norris Lake; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Terry Prater was awarded a Purple Heart, and he received the Silver Star from the President of the United States of America on August 5, 2004, for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action while serving as Team Leader for RED Platoon, Company C, 1st Battalion, 153rd Infantry Regiment, Task Force 1-9 Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division, during combat operations in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom; and

WHEREAS, the heroism for which he was honored took place on August 4, 2004, when he saved the life of Retired Sergeant Tim Ngo; Staff Sergeant Prater used his body to shield Sergeant Ngo, whose skull had been shattered, from a grenade in a series of explosions in Baghdad, Iraq; and

WHEREAS, in a show of gratitude and respect, Retired Sergeant Tim Ngo flew from Minnesota to Speedwell to attend the celebration of life ceremony for Staff Sergeant Terry Prater on March 26, 2007; also in attendance were members of Staff Sergeant Prater's family, including his wife, Amy; his children, Bryson and Madisen; and his brother, who was stationed in Afghanistan with the 82nd Airborne Division and was permitted to return home for the service; and

WHEREAS, representatives of the U.S. Army, the Claiborne County Sheriff's Office, the Claiborne County Rescue Squad, the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, the Tennessee National Guard, and other agencies attended the memorial; a military honor guard saluted Staff Sergeant Prater before his family launched a flotilla of about ten boats for a ceremony to spread his ashes across Norris Lake; and

WHEREAS, still today, Staff Sergeant Prater's son, Bryson Prater, launches his boat and fishes from the Blue Springs Boat Ramp that his father loved so well and called his favorite "fishing hole"; and

WHEREAS, while the heroic deeds of Tennesseans have been extolled throughout the history of our State and nation, the distinguished military service of every proud Tennessean should be illuminated, shared, and properly honored; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Terry Prater of Claiborne County displayed unflinching heroism and made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty, and it would be most fitting to honor his legacy at the place where he made some of his best memories; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we urge the naming of the Blue Springs Boat Ramp in Speedwell in honor of U.S. Army Staff Sergeant Terry William Prater.