

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 1

By Henry

A RESOLUTION to honor Colonel Mike Walker of the Tennessee Highway Patrol for his meritorious service to the State of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this legislative body should honor those resolute public servants of Tennessee who in their years of work have performed with uncommon devotion and enthusiasm; and

WHEREAS, Mike Walker of Dunlap is one such estimable person who served with distinction for thirty-three years with the Tennessee Highway Patrol, retiring in September 2010 having served since March 1, 2006 as Colonel and commanding officer; and

WHEREAS, a native of Dunlap, Tennessee, Mike Walker attended the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga and began his meritorious law enforcement career as a police officer in Signal Mountain before joining the Tennessee Highway Patrol in July of 1977; and

WHEREAS, a graduate of the 57th class of the Northwestern University Traffic Institute's Police Administration Training program, Trooper Walker's first posted assignment was Marion County where he served as a road trooper and quickly earned an unsurpassed reputation for professionalism and attention to detail; and

WHEREAS, his exemplary work ethic and sterling record of service won him advancement to positions of increasing responsibility over the years, including stints with both the Training Division and the Planning and Research Division along with a tenure as Director of Driver Licensing and Control, during which time he played an integral part in the adoption and implementation of the Commercial Driver License law in Tennessee that received national recognition and acclaim; and

WHEREAS, Colonel Mike Walker's rise to the post of commander of the Tennessee Highway Patrol also included service as Troop Lieutenant and District Administrative Lieutenant,

which included supervising troopers across five counties and coordinating security for the Tennessee Highway Patrol at the Ocoee Olympic site during the 1996 Olympics; and

WHEREAS, Mike Walker was named Captain of the Professional Standards Division in 2003, and his responsible duties then included oversight of Driver Improvement; Crash Analysis and Reporting; Commercial Vehicle Analysis Reporting System; Fatality Analysis Reporting System; Research, Planning and Development; and the Office of Strategic Planning; and

WHEREAS, appointed Colonel and commanding officer of the Tennessee Highway Patrol in March of 2006, Mike Walker thus embarked on an exceptional and distinguished tenure as head of the Tennessee Highway Patrol; and

WHEREAS, focused on increasing highway traffic safety, Colonel Walker saw a nearly 25% decline in the number of statewide traffic fatalities between 2006-2009 and the implementation of an electronic crash reporting system for Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, as a result of this success, Colonel Walker received the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Award of Public Service in March of 2009 for his leadership in statewide traffic records improvement; and

WHEREAS, in 2007, Colonel Walker's support for a structure to manage investigative and disciplinary processes within the Department of Safety was instrumental in the establishment of the Office of Professional Responsibility, a unit within the Professional Standards Bureau, which has resulted in a revamped hiring and promotional process without partisan political influence; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure, the Tennessee Highway Patrol was ranked as the top agency twice over the past five years and in the top three agencies twice during that same period by the International Association of Chiefs of Police for its efforts to enforce laws and educate the public on occupant protection, impaired driving, and speeding; and

WHEREAS, in 2009, the Tennessee Highway Patrol also received Commercial Vehicle Safety awards from both the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration for achieving a 35% decline in large truck related fatalities; and

WHEREAS, a true champion of highway safety, Colonel Mike Walker built a solid partnership with the Tennessee Department of Transportation with the implementation of the

"Between the Barrels" program and led the charge for the capital funding improvement that will result in an enhanced communications technology upgrade for the THP to bring modernization to the woefully outdated current system; and

WHEREAS, due to the many structural, policy, and programmatic changes implemented by the Tennessee Highway Patrol and the Department of Safety under his leadership, the State of Tennessee is undoubtedly a safer and better place to live due to Colonel Mike Walker's honorable and gallant service; and

WHEREAS, Mike Walker exemplifies the spirit and allegiance that are characteristic of a true Tennessean and have earned Tennessee the honor of being known far and wide as the "Volunteer State"; and

WHEREAS, devoted to his family, Colonel Walker enjoys the love and support of his wife, Vicki, and their seven children, Elizabeth, Christopher, Summer, Sunni, Sky, Austin, and Michaela; and

WHEREAS, throughout his estimable career, Colonel Walker demonstrated remarkable ability as a law enforcement officer and won the unbridled respect and admiration of the men and women of the Tennessee Highway Patrol and the Tennessee Department of Safety, the Tennessee law enforcement community, and the citizens of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we extend to Colonel Mike Walker our heartfelt wishes for a happy and fulfilling retirement, salute his honorable and distinguished service to the Tennessee Highway Patrol and this State, and wish him every continued success in his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.