

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 370

By Carr

A RESOLUTION to designate May 11, 2011, as "Peace Officers Memorial Day" in Rutherford County.

WHEREAS, in providing for the domestic tranquility of the community as a whole, society recognizes the need for a system of laws; and

WHEREAS, the enforcement of such laws has been entrusted to a small number of dedicated individuals; these individuals, known as law enforcement officers, daily face the rigors of human conflict in protecting those whom they so selflessly serve; and

WHEREAS, May 15 of each year, as established by the United States Congress in 1962 and signed into law by President John F. Kennedy in that year, is designated as National Peace Officers Memorial Day, which is observed in conjunction with National Police Week; and

WHEREAS, the first National Peace Officers Memorial Day Service was held in Washington, D.C., on May 15, 1982, while the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial was dedicated in our nation's capital on October 15, 1991; and

WHEREAS, the 103rd Congress amended the law in 1994 to direct that the U.S. Flag be lowered to half-staff on National Peace Officers Memorial Day; the amendment was signed into law by President Bill Clinton; and

WHEREAS, there are currently more than 900,000 sworn law enforcement officers serving in the United States, which is the highest figure ever. Since the first recorded police death in 1792, there have been nearly 19,000 law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty; and

WHEREAS, 1,624 law enforcement officers have given their lives in the line of duty during the last ten years, an average of one death every 53 hours, or 163 deaths per year; 160 police officers were killed in 2010; and

WHEREAS, the deadliest day in law enforcement history was September 11, 2001, when 72 officers were killed while responding to the terrorist attacks on America; and

WHEREAS, on average, more than 58,000 law enforcement officers are assaulted each year, resulting in some 16,000 injuries; and

WHEREAS, engraved on the Memorial Wall in Washington are the names of nearly 19,000 federal, state, and local law enforcement officers who have died in the line of duty; and

WHEREAS, the governmental bodies of Rutherford County and the cities within its boundaries have traditionally joined the United States in remembering and honoring National Peace Officers Memorial Day; all local and state law enforcement agencies will be holding a flag-raising and wreath-laying ceremony at the Murfreesboro/Rutherford County Civic Plaza on May 11, 2011; in remembrance of all officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice for the communities they protect, those law enforcement agencies ask that on this significant day citizens fly their American Flags at half-mast and that motorists turn their headlights on low beam; and

WHEREAS, it is a well-known fact that law enforcement officers are the front line of our domestic homeland security effort every day, dedicating themselves to the service of others, often at great personal sacrifice; and

WHEREAS, numerous citizens of Rutherford County have placed blue ribbons on their car antennas as part of the local law enforcement's Blue Ribbon Campaign; these ribbons are symbols of support and remembrance for those officers who gave their lives while performing their duties; and

WHEREAS, the Murfreesboro Police Department has lost five of its officers since the Department was created: on December 16, 1946, Officer Herbert McClanahan was shot and killed in the line of duty; Joseph "Butch" Tomlinson, Jr., was killed in a tragic vehicle crash while on duty on October 28, 1999; Officer Kay Rogers died on November 9, 2005, as a result of injuries sustained in another tragic vehicle crash; and on July 22, 2006, Captain Byron Motley lost his life while saving the life of a drowning child; and on June 22, 2007, Officer Matt Lovejoy died after suffering a severe heart attack shortly after finishing his shift; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Highway Patrol lost one of its officers on June 15, 1957, when Patrolman Lewis Raymond Hendon was killed in a traffic accident while he was delivering blood to save the life of an accident victim. All of these officers heroically gave their lives while protecting the citizens of Rutherford County; and

WHEREAS, Deputy U. S. Marshall Samuel Enoch Vaughn, a native of Murfreesboro, was killed in Georgia on August 8, 1953, by the two convicted felons he was transporting to a federal prison in Atlanta; and

WHEREAS, in 2009, there were more than 1.3 million violent crimes committed in the United States, as well as 9.3 million property crimes; and

WHEREAS, law enforcement officers are the first line of defense between criminals and law-abiding citizens, and they must often make life and death decisions in an instant; they are trained not only to enforce the law but to do so without prejudice or malice, while using good judgment and discretion, and with the highest regard for the constitutional rights of all people; and

WHEREAS, law enforcement officers must possess a general knowledge of medicine and psychology, as well as courage, courtesy, respect, and self-restraint; they can never allow their personal feelings to influence their decisions; and

WHEREAS, law enforcement officers recognize that the badge is a symbol of public trust, and they must be forever mindful of the trust placed in them; they must strive to earn that trust, even in the face of adversity; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting and proper that those law enforcement officers who have dedicated their lives to the service of humanity through law enforcement, and those officers who have given their lives in this noble cause, be recognized and remembered for the accomplishment of their high purposes; and

WHEREAS, the State of Tennessee is proud to join forces with the United States Congress, Rutherford County, the law enforcement agencies within Rutherford County, and all concerned citizens throughout Tennessee and the United States to observe "National Peace Officers Memorial Day"; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby designate May 11, 2011, as "Peace Officers Memorial Day" in Rutherford County.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we encourage all citizens to take this opportunity to honor and remember those courageous law enforcement officers who gave their lives to protect the communities in which they worked and lived.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation to each law enforcement agency in Rutherford County with this final clause omitted from such copy.