

2019 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 286

BY REPRESENTATIVES TERRY LANDRY, BAGNERIS, BOUIE, BRASS, CARPENTER, GARY CARTER, COX, DUPLESSIS, FRANKLIN, GAINES, GLOVER, JIMMY HARRIS, JACKSON, JAMES, JEFFERSON, JENKINS, JORDAN, LARVADAIN, LYONS, MARCELLE, DUSTIN MILLER, MOORE, NORTON, PIERRE, AND SMITH

A RESOLUTION

To commend the current and former African American women who have served or are serving on the Louisiana State Police force.

WHEREAS, in 1936, the Louisiana Legislature passed legislation creating the State Police, which emerged from a highway commission in 1922 with a force of sixteen men patrolling the highways on motorcycles to its current status of a state police force of one thousand sixty-three men and women responsible for all elements of criminal and highway safety interdiction in the state; and

WHEREAS, the mission of the Louisiana State Police is to ensure the safety and security of the people in the state through enforcement, education, and providing of other essential public safety services; and

WHEREAS, the office of state police is a state agency with an incredibly rich history and with a motto of "Courtesy, Loyalty, Service"; and

WHEREAS, state troopers have faced obstacles from the time of inception of the agency; however, historians have confirmed that their most challenging assignment, along with the Louisiana National Guard, was being called to guard and protect civil rights marchers in Bogalusa and, in 1965 and 1967, during which they had the task of trying to prevent the violence and bloodshed that had scarred other cities across the nation during the civil rights movement; and

WHEREAS, in 1972, Governor Edwin Edwards appointed Colonel Donald Thibodeaux as Superintendent of State Police, and the colonel led the department through many reforms, including allowing women to join the force in 1974; and

WHEREAS, it was not until 1976 when Trooper Joyce Stephanie Isaac Thibodeaux, now deceased, who started her law enforcement career with the Lafayette City Police

Department, became the first African American woman to join the Louisiana State Police; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, there are only eight African American women who wear or have worn the uniform; the retired and current African American women of the Louisiana State Police force are the late Master Trooper Joyce Thibodeaux; retired Master Trooper Joanne Rozigas; retired Lieutenant Charron Thomas; Lieutenant Treone Larvadain; Sergeant Sanikka Williams; senior troopers Zuleika Joseph and Lisa Quijano; and troopers Melissa George, Qualyndrea Jones, and Tiah Larvadain; and

WHEREAS, like all troopers serving the citizens of Louisiana, these eight women have maintained the values of the Louisiana State Police since the day they graduated from the academy: loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage; and

WHEREAS, without a doubt, these women are dedicated to their profession and they are also dedicated to their families as wives, mothers, grandmothers, daughters, and sisters; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, Lieutenant Treone Larvadain and Trooper Tiah Larvadain became the first mother and daughter troopers in the eighty-two years of the Louisiana State Police history; and

WHEREAS, among the most well-trained law enforcement officers in the country, these troopers are proudly and courageously paving the way for others to follow and are inspirations for all women to never give up on their dreams.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend the African American women, past and present, of the Louisiana State Police force for their law enforcement service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the family of the late Joyce Thibodeaux, and to Joanne Rozigas, Charron Thomas, Treone Larvadain, Sanikka Williams, Zuleika Joseph, Lisa Quijano, Melissa George, Qualyndrea Jones, and Tiah Larvadain.

---

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES