

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 100

BY SENATORS WARD, ALARIO, ALLAIN, APPEL, BARROW, BISHOP, BOUDREAUX, CARTER, CHABERT, CLAITOR, COLOMB, CORTEZ, DONAHUE, ERDEY, FANNIN, GATTI, HEWITT, JOHNS, LAFLEUR, LAMBERT, LONG, LUNEAU, MARTINY, MILKOVICH, MILLS, MIZELL, MORRELL, MORRISH, PEACOCK, PERRY, PETERSON, PRICE, RISER, GARY SMITH, JOHN SMITH, TARVER, THOMPSON, WALSWORTH AND WHITE AND REPRESENTATIVES ABRAHAM, ABRAMSON, AMEDEE, ANDERS, ARMES, BACALA, BAGLEY, BAGNERIS, BARRAS, BERTHELOT, BILLIOT, BISHOP, BOUIE, BRASS, CHAD BROWN, TERRY BROWN, CARMODY, CARPENTER, GARY CARTER, ROBBY CARTER, STEVE CARTER, CHANEY, CONNICK, COUSSAN, COX, CREWS, CROMER, DANAHAY, DAVIS, DEVILLIER, DUPLESSIS, DWIGHT, EDMONDS, EMERSON, FALCONER, FOIL, FRANKLIN, GAINES, GAROFALO, GISCLAIR, GLOVER, GUINN, HALL, JIMMY HARRIS, LANCE HARRIS, HAVARD, HAZEL, HENRY, HENSGENS, HILFERTY, HILL, HODGES, HOFFMANN, HOLLIS, HORTON, HOWARD, HUNTER, HUVAL, IVEY, JACKSON, JAMES, JEFFERSON, JENKINS, JOHNSON, JONES, JORDAN, NANCY LANDRY, TERRY LANDRY, LEBAS, LEGER, LEOPOLD, LYONS, MACK, MAGEE, MARCELLE, MARINO, MCFARLAND, MIGUEZ, DUSTIN MILLER, GREGORY MILLER, MORENO, JAY MORRIS, JIM MORRIS, MUSCARELLO, NORTON, PEARSON, PIERRE, POPE, PUGH, PYLANT, REYNOLDS, RICHARD, SCHEXNAYDER, SEABAUGH, SHADOIN, SIMON, SMITH, STAGNI, STEFANSKI, STOKES, TALBOT, THIBAUT, THOMAS, WHITE, WRIGHT AND ZERINGUE

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To express the heartfelt condolences of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the untimely death of Christopher Michael "Chris" Lawton, Zachary Fire Department Deputy Chief and Zachary Police Department Reserve Officer and to commend the legacy of public service he leaves to his community and state.

WHEREAS, it is with profound sorrow that the Legislature of Louisiana extends condolences to the family, friends, and fellowship of firefighters and law enforcement personnel who loved and admired Chris Lawton for his dedication to professional excellence and to the values he upheld; and

WHEREAS, Chris Lawton was a kind and honorable man of great courage, a public servant of the highest caliber, who was among those chosen few, those first-responders, who unselfishly place themselves in harm's way to assure the safety of all, the preservation of peace, and enforcement of law; and

WHEREAS, on March 12, 2018, Chris succumbed to injuries encountered in the line

of duty as a reserve police officer, the first line-of-duty death in Zachary Police Department history; he departed this life at the age of forty-one; even so, his legacy of twenty-two years of exemplary public service to the people of this state whom he served so well, shall remain forever in their memories; and

WHEREAS, public service came naturally to Chris Lawton, his father was also a volunteer fire chief; and

WHEREAS, a graduate of Zachary High School in 1995, Chris began his career as a firefighter the following year at the Baton Rouge District Six Fire Department on Prescott Road along with Fire Marshal Butch Browning, who was then a chief; and

WHEREAS, Deputy Chief Chris Lawton joined the Zachary Fire Department in 1998, earned the rank of captain, received his fire science associate degree from the Carrol L. Herring Fire and Emergency Training Institute at LSU, and he also served the department as an arson investigator; and

WHEREAS, Chris was a "double hero" having served his community as both a firefighter and reserve policeman; and

WHEREAS, in 2008, Chris joined the Zachary Police Department as a fully certified reserve officer, which is a volunteer position, where he worked part time and without pay for the last decade; he logged more than two thousand hours as a reserve officer; and

WHEREAS, during his career, Chief Lawton received numerous acknowledgments that included Medical Life Saves, Fire Stops, and Unit and Crew Citations; in 2014, Chris was the recipient of a medical lifesaver award after rendering aid to a heart attack victim while he and his family were on vacation in Mexico; and

WHEREAS, Chief Lawton shall be remembered as a motivator who shared his expertise with his coworkers, placing particular emphasis on the credo, "to protect and serve"; he was always "on the job", twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week, and was well-respected by his peers; and

WHEREAS, Chris, "always wanting to learn", graduated from the Leadership North training program for local leaders organized by the Zachary Chamber of Commerce, was certified as a Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) firearms instructor, and worked alongside Zachary police detectives on high level investigations; and

WHEREAS, Chris had a generous spirit; he volunteered at community events, at charity fundraisers, and at his church, Zachary United Methodist, to build wheelchair ramps or cut lawns for the elderly; and

WHEREAS, Chief Lawton was a founding member of Local #4644 of the Zachary Firefighters Association and a member of the International Association of Arson Investigators; and

WHEREAS, at his funeral, Chief Chris Lawton was honored on behalf of a grateful nation with an honor guard and a procession of fellow firefighters and law enforcement officers from across the country who paid homage to their fallen comrade and accompanied him to his final rest; and

WHEREAS, the lengthy procession of first-responders escorted Chief Lawton passed the police station and the fire station along Main Street and passed an American flag hung between two crisscrossed ladder trucks with thousands of mourners who lined the street and held flags; and

WHEREAS, community leaders honored the memory of Chief Chris Lawton; the Zachary City Council had a moment of silence to memorialize his service; Baton Rouge Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome ordered all flags at city-parish buildings be flown at half-staff; and he received dual funeral honors: In the Line of Duty Police Officer Death Honors as well as Active Duty Fire Department Death Honors; and

WHEREAS, Chief Chris Lawton is survived by his loving wife, Shannon; their children, Marshall and Claire; and a host of extended family and loving friends; and

WHEREAS, Chris Lawton had a profound effect on the people he loved and the community he served and he shall be remembered for his service, bravery, and sacrifice; and

WHEREAS, as his comrades-in-arms will note, Deputy Chief Chris Lawton is now 10-7; he is at the End of Watch; and he has gone to his heavenly home to be at peace with his savior, Jesus Christ.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express heartfelt condolences to the family, friends, fellow firefighters and law enforcement officers of Deputy Chief Chris Lawton of Zachary, who died doing his best in the line of duty as a reserve police officer on March 12, 2018.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby note his dedication to the noble calling of both fire protection and law enforcement, his character and humanity, and his sacrifice, and does hereby make evident the enduring appreciation and gratitude of the people of the state of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the family of Deputy Chief Christopher Michael "Chris" Lawton.

---

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

---

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES