



A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA URGING CONGRESS TO CATEGORIZE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATORS AS A PROTECTIVE SERVICE OCCUPATION UNDER THE FEDERAL STANDARD OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM.

WHEREAS, public safety telecommunicators play a critical role in emergency response; and

WHEREAS, the work public safety telecommunicators perform goes far beyond merely relaying information between the public and first responders; and

WHEREAS, when responding to reports of missing, abducted, and sexually exploited children, the information obtained and actions taken by public safety telecommunicators form the foundation for an effective response; and

WHEREAS, when a hostage taker or suicidal person calls 9-1-1, the first contact is with the public safety telecommunicator whose negotiation skills can prevent the situation from getting worse; and

WHEREAS, during active shooter incidents, public safety telecommunicators coach callers through first aid and give advice to prevent further harm, all while collecting vital information to provide situational awareness for responding officers; and

WHEREAS, when police officers, firefighters, and emergency medical technicians are being shot at, their calls for help go to public safety telecommunicators; and

WHEREAS, public safety telecommunicators are often communicating with people in great distress, harm, fear, or injury, while employing their experience and training to recognize a critical piece of information; and

WHEREAS, in fact, there have been incidents in which public safety telecommunicators, recognizing the sound of a racked shotgun, have prevented serious harm or death of law enforcement officers who would

have otherwise walked into a trap; and

WHEREAS, the work of public safety telecommunicators comes with an extreme emotional and physical impact that is compounded by long hours and the around-the-clock nature of the job; and

WHEREAS, research has suggested that public safety telecommunicators are exposed to trauma that may lead to the development of posttraumatic stress disorder; and

WHEREAS, recognizing the risks associated with exposure to traumatic events, some agencies provide critical incident stress debriefing teams to lessen the psychological impact and accelerate recovery for public safety telecommunicators and first responders, alike; and

WHEREAS, the federal Standard Occupational Classification System is designed and maintained solely for statistical purposes, and is used by federal statistical agencies to classify workers and jobs into occupational categories for the purpose of collecting, calculating, analyzing, or disseminating data; and

WHEREAS, the federal occupations in the Standard Occupational Classification System are classified based on work performed and, in some cases, on the skills, education, or training needed to perform the work; and

WHEREAS, classifying public safety telecommunicators as protective service occupations would correct an inaccurate representation in the Standard Occupational Classification System, recognize these professionals for the lifesaving work they perform, and better align the Standard Occupational Classification System with related classification systems.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

(1) That the 67th Senate and House of Representatives of Montana maintain standing support of public safety telecommunicators.

(2) That the 67th Senate and House of Representatives of Montana urge the United States Congress to pass legislation to categorize public safety telecommunicators as a protective service occupation under the Standard Occupational Classification System.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of State send a copy of this resolution to the President of the United States, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the Majority and

Minority Leaders of the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate, to each member of the Montana Congressional Delegation, and to the county commissions of Montana.

- END -

I hereby certify that the within bill,
HJ 14, originated in the House.

Chief Clerk of the House

Speaker of the House

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2021.

President of the Senate

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2021.

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 14
INTRODUCED BY F. GARNER, J. WELBORN

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