86R16805 BK-D

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R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, From March 2 to March 21, 2018, the city of Austin was gripped by a series of seemingly random bombings, which ushered in a state of fear and vigilance in the community and called forth a highly coordinated multiagency response to bring the perpetrator of these heinous crimes to justice; and

WHEREAS, The bombs, which took the lives of Anthony Stephan House and Draylen Mason and injured five other people, followed no apparent pattern, were delivered to targets all across the city, and varied in their trigger methods, from a string of package explosives to the eventual use of a tripwire; the unpredictable nature of the attacks posed a complex challenge to investigators with the Austin Police Department, led by then-interim police chief Brian Manley; further assistance was provided by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, and hundreds of local and state police and federal agents were assigned to the case as it built to its crescendo; and

WHEREAS, A trail of evidence uncovered by police eventually led to the identification of the suspect and a standoff in the nearby city of Round Rock on March 21; as SWAT team officers closed in on the man, he committed suicide by detonating a final explosive in his vehicle, bringing the harrowing incident to its conclusion with no additional fatalities; and

WHEREAS, Countless individuals from a host of organizations and units contributed their skills to the investigation; those deserving of special recognition for their efforts include members of the Austin Police Department SWAT Team who were present on the scene during the fraught final moments of the manhunt: Katrina Pruitt, Brannon Ellsworth, Robert Justesen, Vincent Garcia, William Jackman, Pat O'Connor, Leighton Radtke, Jon Abbott, Mike Ridge, Jeff Kingsley, Jared Hidalgo, and Tandy Perkins; and

WHEREAS, A number of bomb technicians also risked their lives examining and neutralizing the numerous suspicious packages and devices that were discovered over a period of weeks; they included members of the Austin PD Bomb Squad, Courtney Renfro, Jeff Dwyer, Jesse Carrillo, Caine Johnson, Jay McCormick, Josh Euhus, Jeff Joseph, George Ewing, Rob Nunez, Kent Collins, Scott Rhoads, and Troy Wiser; members of the Texas Department of Public Safety Bomb Squad, Thomas Kovacs, Raymond Real, Donnie Bolton, and Andrew Martinez; members of the San Antonio Bomb Squad, Jeremy Swindells, Chad Culp, Jon Sarno, Matthew Armstrong, Jason Alberthal, and Jason Lemcke; and members of the Houston Bomb Squad, Alton Baker, Greg Smith, and Jason Countryman; and

WHEREAS, Tasked with ending a reign of terror that threatened to claim many more lives, these men and women met the challenge before them with tremendous skill and courage, and they have earned the heartfelt gratitude of the citizens of Austin and the entire State of Texas; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 86th Texas Legislature hereby honor the SWAT team and bomb squad members who responded to the 2018 Austin bombings and extend to them sincere best wishes for continued success with their important work.