

By: Israel

H.R. No. 747

R E S O L U T I O N

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

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

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

23 WHEREAS, Countless individuals from a host of organizations
24 and units contributed their skills to the investigation; those

1 deserving of special recognition for their efforts include members
2 of the Austin Police Department SWAT Team who were present on the
3 scene during the fraught final moments of the manhunt: Katrina
4 Pruitt, Brannon Ellsworth, Robert Justesen, Vincent Garcia,
5 William Jackman, Pat O'Connor, Leighton Radtke, Jon Abbott, Mike
6 Ridge, Jeff Kingsley, Jared Hidalgo, and Tandy Perkins; and

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

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

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