

By: Springer, et al.

S.R. No. 6

SENATE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, On September 11, 2001, our nation was forever changed by the deadliest terrorist attack to take place on American soil, and as we observe the 20th anniversary of that tragedy, it is fitting that we pay tribute to the courage and heroism that shone on one of our country's darkest days and in the challenging years that followed; and

WHEREAS, On that infamous morning, terrorist hijackers seized four civilian airliners, using two of them to bring down the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City and another to explode into the Pentagon; the fourth airplane, United Flight 93, believed to be targeting the United States Capitol, crashed in the Pennsylvania countryside thanks to the heroic resistance of its passengers; altogether, nearly 3,000 innocent people lost their lives, including more than 400 New York first responders, 184 individuals at the Pentagon, and the 40 passengers of Flight 93; and

WHEREAS, Among those who survived the attack on the Pentagon was United States Army Lieutenant Colonel Brian Birdwell, who had already distinguished himself throughout his over-17 years of duty in the armed forces; while working in his second floor office when American Airlines Flight 77 crashed into the Pentagon building, he was critically wounded and received burns over more than 60 percent of his body; this valiant officer

S.R. No. 6

was hospitalized for months as he endured 39 operations and a number of skin grafts; he was awarded the Purple Heart, and upon his retirement from the army in July 2004, he was further honored with the Legion of Merit medal; along with his wife, Mel Birdwell, he later founded a nonprofit organization, Face the Fire Ministries, to support survivors of severe burns, wounded service members, and their families; in 2010 Lieutenant Colonel, Retired, Birdwell continued his public service when he was elected to the Texas Senate; and

WHEREAS, While September 11, 2001, will forever be remembered as a day of tragedy and loss, we also remember the selfless determination of law enforcement officers, firefighters, and other rescue workers who charged into danger that morning and in the days after; these first responders continued to show up and search for survivors and remains in the days and weeks after the attacks, and many of these heroes lost their lives assisting the people who were trapped and injured; and

WHEREAS, Texans have accounted for a significant number of men and women of the United States Armed Forces who lost their lives or were wounded when answering the call to action in locations around the globe as our country responded to the terrorist threat; and

WHEREAS, Texas and The United States has long been a beacon of hope for vulnerable and disenfranchised people around the world, and the State of Texas has long valued and defended the principles of democracy, individual liberty, freedom of speech,

and freedom of religion; as citizens of conscience of this great land, we bear both the responsibility and the honor to raise our voices to honor and tell the story of survival and resilience in order to remember the valor that was demonstrated by countless people on September 11, 2001, and in its aftermath; the roll call of honor that includes everyone from the first responders and ordinary civilians who came to the aid of victims, to the living friends and loved ones of those who perished; and

WHEREAS, the 20th anniversary of 9/11 offers an appropriate opportunity to pay tribute to all of the heroes who emerged from that tragedy and to acknowledge the sacrifice and determination that has enabled our nation to endure; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the 87th Texas Legislature, 3rd Called Session, hereby commemorate the 20th anniversary of the September 11 terrorist attacks and all those who have sacrificed in dedicated service to our state and country as a result of that fateful day.