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By:  Darby H.R. No. 1044

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, The Texas Department of Public Safety plays an essential role in safeguarding the Capitol Complex in Austin in addition to its many other important law enforcement duties, and the exemplary service of DPS officers has proven especially valuable in meeting the unique security challenges that have existed at the statehouse over the past year; and

WHEREAS, Upholding their mission to "Protect and Serve Texas," DPS personnel across the state distinguish themselves on a daily basis as they carry out their vital work; the officers assigned to the agency's Capitol Region are tasked with policing the State Capitol and the surrounding area, which encompasses many state government facilities; supervised by the regional director, the command includes commissioned and noncommissioned personnel who are divided into various districts that span the 46-square-block complex; and

WHEREAS, The responsibilities of these dedicated public servants include providing security for the Capitol grounds and for visiting dignitaries, staffing entrances to the building, and monitoring surveillance cameras to ensure a safe and orderly environment at the statehouse; moreover, they supervise traffic and parking, investigate crimes, conduct vulnerability assessments, and handle crowd control during rallies and demonstrations; and

WHEREAS, Beginning in late May of 2020, additional DPS officers were assigned to the Texas Capitol as a result of ongoing protests taking place in the area; arriving from locations all around the state, these peace officers helped to maintain safety and to protect the historic property from damage; the Capitol remained closed for nearly seven months, with an increased contingent of DPS troopers remaining on site into 2021; and

WHEREAS, Those deserving of special recognition for their hard work and professionalism include DPS troopers from the North Texas Region, the Southeast Texas Region, the South Texas Region, the West Texas Region, the Northwest Texas Region, and the Central Texas Region, all of whom assisted their colleagues in the Capitol Region during this challenging time; additionally, profound thanks is owed to Colonel Steven McCraw, the director of the Department of Public Safety, Lieutenant Colonel Freeman Martin, Regional Director David Cabrera of the Capitol Region, Major Gabe Ortiz of the Capitol Region Criminal Investigations Division, Major Christopher Jones, Captain Timothy Caradine, Captain Anthony Rodriguez, and Security Operations Manager Kari Raesz for coordinating and accommodating the additional personnel and enhanced operations at the Capitol; and

WHEREAS, The steadfast commitment demonstrated by the DPS personnel stationed at the Texas Capitol is in keeping with the exceptional service rendered by all members of this elite law enforcement agency, each of whom has earned the lasting gratitude of the state's citizens; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 87th Texas Legislature hereby commend the Texas Department of Public Safety for its outstanding record of protecting the Capitol Complex in Austin and extend to all those affiliated with the agency sincere appreciation for their significant contributions; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be prepared for the Texas Department of Public Safety as an expression of high regard by the Texas House of Representatives.