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LRB102 11353 LAW 16686 r

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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, History honors the soldiers of war that fight to defend the nation; at this time, we honor a different kind of soldier fighting a different kind of war, one guided not by master tacticians or generals but guided instead by the hearts, grit, and resolve of those willing to risk their lives not in the trenches of faraway lands but in the intensive care units, hospitals, precincts, and fire stations here at home; and

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WHEREAS, According to a 2017 compilation of data on the Emergency Services Sector in the United States by the Department of Homeland Security, the first responder community is comprised of an estimated 4.6 million career and volunteer professionals within five primary disciplines, which are law enforcement, fire and rescue services, emergency medical services, emergency management, and public works; and

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WHEREAS, Of all U.S. states, Illinois has the sixth largest population and the 25th largest land area and is home to over 12 million residents who occupy nearly 58,000 square miles of land that is prone to freezing temperatures, torrential rains and flash floods, fires, tornados, severe storms, and other natural disasters, as well as threats of violence and terror; and

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1           WHEREAS, Illinois is known for its extraordinary response  
2 to these emergencies; 911 dispatchers, as well as professional  
3 and volunteer fire, police, emergency medical technicians, and  
4 paramedic workers stand as our first line of defense in  
5 protecting our communities to ensure that Illinois is the  
6 safest place to live, work, and visit; and

7           WHEREAS, No greater courage is demonstrated than that of  
8 the dedicated and brave first responders who run toward  
9 emergencies that threaten the communities and cities they call  
10 home and the welfare and lives of those who live there; first  
11 responders put their lives on the line by protecting and  
12 administering care to others in need; and

13           WHEREAS, First responders accept the challenges and  
14 responsibilities of serving others without a second thought;  
15 they selflessly perform their duties, sometimes even at the  
16 cost of their own safety and lives, in order to provide a  
17 superior level of service more concerned with the needs of  
18 others than their own; and

19           WHEREAS, With the COVID-19 pandemic, first responders have  
20 been called to perform a service unlike any the country has  
21 faced in more than a century; they have proven that they can be  
22 relied upon to provide their services in the face of more

1 adversity, not less; COVID-19 has not replaced the disasters  
2 of yesterday's normal, but it stands as an extra force with  
3 which to contend among the disasters of today's new normal;  
4 and

5 WHEREAS, Swift aid and assistance begins with 911  
6 dispatchers, the first responders that know too well the  
7 importance of getting the proper aid where it is most needed as  
8 efficiently as possible; the responsibility of dispatching  
9 police, fire, and medical personnel is often the difference  
10 between lives saved and lives lost; with the unprecedented  
11 pressure of COVID-19, 911 dispatchers are an integral part of  
12 the public safety response, now more than ever, and remind us  
13 that the bridge between refuge and peril begins with the team  
14 of first responders too often overlooked; and

15 WHEREAS, Our attempts to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic  
16 have changed more than how we act toward one another; we have  
17 changed our perspective of heroism, of bravery, and of what it  
18 means to be a first responder or, as the term has now evolved,  
19 a frontline and/or essential worker; and

20 WHEREAS, The sometimes insurmountable pressure that first  
21 responders carry on their shoulders, in their gallant pursuit  
22 to save lives even at the sacrifice of their own, places them  
23 at the echelon of the those that receive the most thunderous

1 praise, the highest of honors, the deepest respect, and the  
2 most profound recognitions for their consistent commitments  
3 and contributions to safety, defense, and honor; therefore, be  
4 it

5       RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL  
6 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we recognize the  
7 efforts of Illinois' first responders, and we extend our  
8 gratitude to all first responders for continuously putting  
9 their lives on the line for the citizens of Illinois; and be it  
10 further

11       RESOLVED, That we recognize and remember the first  
12 responders we have lost along the way.