

2006 SESSION

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SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 21

Offered March 6, 2006

Commending the New Kent County Sheriff's Office.

Patrons—McDougle and Norment

WHEREAS, on August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina completely devastated the Mississippi Gulf Coast east of New Orleans, causing unprecedented property damage and overwhelming human suffering in Mississippi, Louisiana, and other Gulf Coast states; and

WHEREAS, as the full extent of this devastation was realized in the weeks following the storm, government agencies at the local, state, and federal levels, as well as countless nongovernmental and charitable organizations from across the nation, unselfishly responded to numerous calls for aid and assistance; and

WHEREAS, by the weekend of September 11, 2005, a team of dedicated sheriff's deputies and dispatchers from the New Kent County Sheriff's Office was on its way to Mississippi to relieve weary law-enforcement personnel for three weeks in hurricane-ravaged Biloxi; and

WHEREAS, the relief program was spearheaded by New Kent Sergeant Steve Long, who wanted the department to do more "than just put money in an envelope"; and

WHEREAS, the New Kent County Sheriff's Office collected more than \$2,000 in donations as word got out, and even more items were loaded into a donated tractor-trailer for police officers, as well as for residents of Biloxi; and

WHEREAS, in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the 125-officer Biloxi Police Department was strained to the breaking point; nearly a third of the Biloxi officers had lost their homes and all of their possessions, and the rest had suffered significant damage to their houses; and

WHEREAS, relief by the New Kent deputies allowed Biloxi officers a little time to regroup and begin to get their own and their families' lives in order; the Biloxi Police Department was chosen because it is about the same size as the New Kent County Sheriff's Office; and

WHEREAS, the deputies lent a helping hand for three weeks, were self-sufficient, lived out of tents and make-shift shelters, and used only supplies they took with them, which included a rental trailer full of food and other supplies that was driven to Biloxi by New Kent Lieutenant Charles Gardner and his wife; and

WHEREAS, the New Kent deputies who stayed behind enthusiastically pulled double shifts to cover for the officers serving in Biloxi, and the administrative staff contributed its part so that the New Kent community would be adequately covered by the sheriff's department; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate of Virginia, That the Senate hereby commend the New Kent County Sheriff's Office for professionally and unselfishly providing effective and exemplary service to its fellow citizens in Mississippi; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Sheriff F. W. Howard, Jr., and his deputies, dispatchers, and staff as an expression of the Senate of Virginia's admiration for the response of the New Kent County Sheriff's Office in support of the Hurricane Katrina relief efforts.

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