

2014 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 234

Commending the Safe Surfin' Foundation.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, January 31, 2014

Agreed to by the Senate, February 6, 2014

WHEREAS, Operation Blue Ridge Thunder was organized in 1998 under the auspices of the Bedford County Sheriff's Office as an undercover cyberspace patrol to track and arrest perpetrators of computer-related crimes against children; and

WHEREAS, the Bedford County Sheriff's Office was one of only 10 law-enforcement agencies to receive federal funding in 1998 for its work in unearthing pedophiles and makers and distributors of child pornography and received national attention when Operation Blue Ridge Thunder was featured on the CBS News documentary series *48 Hours* in 2000; and

WHEREAS, under the command of Sheriff Michael J. Brown, Operation Blue Ridge Thunder became internationally known for cracking tough cases and finding pedophiles that prey upon innocent children; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his impressive record of investigating and arresting sexual predators, Sheriff Michael J. Brown has a 100 percent conviction rate in the cases built by Operation Blue Ridge Thunder; and

WHEREAS, while working to apprehend sexual predators, Sheriff Michael J. Brown realized that children need education about the tactics of and greater protection from pedophiles, especially while online; and

WHEREAS, in 2000, Operation Blue Ridge Thunder evolved into the nonprofit Safe Surfin' Foundation, today codirected by the Bedford County Sheriff's Office and the nationally recognized Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, to educate children and their parents about the risks and safe practices of online activity; and

WHEREAS, the Safe Surfin' Foundation, with the help of volunteers and gifts from corporate and private donors, supplies Internet safety educational materials to schools, libraries, home schools, and other children's groups without charge; and

WHEREAS, the Safe Surfin' Foundation uses interactive websites, special events, printed materials, PSAs, and other educational opportunities to educate the public about Internet crimes involving children; the foundation works with the U.S. Department of Justice, school systems, public libraries that offer Internet access, law-enforcement agencies, and corporate sponsors to expand its educational outreach; and

WHEREAS, the Safe Surfin' Foundation has also supported the wounded warriors of H.E.R.O. (Human Exploitation Rescue Operatives) Child Rescue Corps, which fights child exploitation, child abuse, and human trafficking, and has worked with Moose International to supply computers and monitors for veterans engaged in specialized training at Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee to protect innocent children from online sexual predators; and

WHEREAS, the Safe Surfin' Foundation, Sheriff Michael J. Brown, and law-enforcement agencies continue to work tirelessly to capture and detain predators for eventual prosecution, making society safer for children; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Safe Surfin' Foundation; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Sheriff Michael J. Brown, chairman of the board and cofounder of the Safe Surfin' Foundation, as an expression of the General Assembly's appreciation for the foundation's work and service in protecting Virginia's children from sexual predators.

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