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HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 321

Offered February 26, 2015

Commending the Virginia National Guard.

Patron—Anderson

WHEREAS, the courageous soldiers and airmen of the Virginia National Guard have made outstanding and valuable contributions to the defense of the United States and the security of the Commonwealth and have advanced the cause of freedom around the world; and

WHEREAS, since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, more than 15,000 Virginia soldiers and airmen have served on active duty in support of Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, and New Dawn, helping to maintain security in the United States and further the cause of freedom around the world; and

WHEREAS, soldiers from the Emporia-based 1710th Transportation Company, the Virginia Beach-based 1945th Contingency Contracting Team, the Sandston-based Detachment 26, Operational Support Airlift Command, and the Fort Pickett-based 134th Chaplain Support Team returned from successful federal active duty mobilizations in 2014; and

WHEREAS, soldiers from Virginia Beach-based 529th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion deployed to Kuwait and Iraq, where they are providing mission command for critical sustainment operations and supporting combat units throughout the Central Command region; and

WHEREAS, when the F-22 Raptor fighter jet flew its first combat missions against Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant targets, Virginia National Guard Airmen from the 192nd Fighter Wing worked side-by-side with active duty forces; and

WHEREAS, since 2001, more than 7,300 Virginia National Guard personnel have responded to fires, floods, hurricanes, snow storms, and other natural disasters, assisting citizens of the Commonwealth, as well as other states, in their time of need; and

WHEREAS, Virginia National Guard aviators, using UH-72 Lakota helicopters, provided aerial detection and monitoring support to the United States Department of Homeland Security and Customs and Border Protection along the border between the United States and Mexico; and

WHEREAS, more than 225 soldiers, airmen, and members of the Virginia Defense Force supported the inauguration of Governor Terrence R. McAuliffe, and soldiers provided a variety of assistance after heavy snow created hazardous road conditions across the state in February 2015; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Army and Air Guard engineers from the 276th Engineer Battalion and 203rd RED HORSE Squadron supported the City of Petersburg by removing derelict structures associated with the drug trade; and

WHEREAS, more than 120 members of the all-volunteer Virginia Defense Force augmented local law enforcement to help make sure the Winchester Apple Blossom Festival went smoothly; the Virginia Defense Force continues to be integrated into every major operation conducted by the Virginia National Guard and embodies the spirit of selfless service; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia National Guard could not perform its mission without the support of the civilian workforce, families, employers, and community members; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia National Guard is recognized as one of the best in the nation in many critical areas and provides a ready, reliable, relevant, and rapidly responding force that deploys as directed by the Governor of Virginia to assist state and local authorities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That the Virginia National Guard and its dedicated soldiers, airmen, Virginia Defense Force members, and civilian employees hereby be commended for their devotion to duty and many outstanding and valuable contributions to the defense of the Commonwealth and the United States; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to General Timothy P. Williams, adjutant general of Virginia, as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration and gratitude for the service and sacrifices of the patriotic soldiers, airmen, Virginia Defense Force members, and civilian employees of the Virginia National Guard.

INTRODUCED

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