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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 409

Offered March 2, 2016

Commending Sergeant First Class Charles Martland, USA.

Patrons—Freitas, Anderson, Adams, Aird, Albo, Austin, Bagby, Bell, John J., Bell, Richard P., Bell, Robert B., Bloxom, Boysko, Bulova, Byron, Campbell, Carr, Cline, Cole, Collins, Cox, Davis, Dudenhefer, Edmunds, Fariss, Farrell, Filler-Corn, Fowler, Garrett, Gilbert, Greason, Habeeb, Head, Helsel, Heretick, Herring, Hester, Hodges, Hope, Howell, Hugo, Ingram, James, Jones, Keam, Kilgore, Knight, Kory, Krizek, Landes, LaRock, Leftwich, LeMunyon, Levine, Lindsey, Lingamfelter, Lopez, Loupassi, Marshall, D.W., Marshall, R.G., Mason, Massie, McClellan, McQuinn, Miller, Minchew, Miyares, Morefield, Morris, Murphy, O'Bannon, O'Quinn, Orrock, Peace, Pillion, Plum, Pogge, Poindexter, Ransone, Rasoul, Robinson, Rush, Sickles, Simon, Spruill, Sullivan, Taylor, Torian, Toscano, Tyler, Villanueva, Ward, Ware, Watts, Weber, Wilt, Wright, Yancey and Yost; Senators: Alexander, Barker, Black, Carrico, Chafin, Chase, Cosgrove, Dance, Deeds, DeSteph, Dunnavant, Ebbin, Edwards, Favola, Garrett, Hanger, Howell, Lewis, Locke, Lucas, Marsden, McDougale, McEachin, McPike, Miller, Newman, Norment, Obenshain, Petersen, Reeves, Ruff, Saslaw, Stanley, Stuart, Sturtevant, Suetterlein, Surovell, Vogel, Wagner and Wexton

WHEREAS, Sergeant First Class Charles Martland, USA, is a dedicated husband and father of two sons, and he has served for 11 years in the United States Army; and

WHEREAS, Sergeant First Class (SFC) Martland is a member of the elite United States Army Special Forces Regiment, serving as a Special Forces Non-Commissioned Officer or "Green Beret"; and

WHEREAS, SFC Martland has served with distinction as both a student of several special operations courses and as a special operations course instructor; and

WHEREAS, SFC Martland has served with distinction on combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and was awarded a Bronze Star Medal with the "V" Device for his valorous actions during a firefight in the Kunduz Province of Afghanistan in 2010; and

WHEREAS, while serving in Kunduz Province, SFC Martland was informed that an American-trained Afghan police officer had chained a young boy to his bed and raped him repeatedly; he also learned that the boy's mother, while pleading for her son's release, had been viciously beaten; and

WHEREAS, when SFC Martland and his team leader confronted the Afghan police officer, that officer laughed about the rapes and beating, demonstrating an utter lack of shame or remorse for his actions, and suggested that he had no intention of refraining from his vile and contemptible behavior; and

WHEREAS, SFC Martland and the team leader physically confronted the police officer as a warning against future criminal behavior and demonstrated to the victims of his crimes that they would be protected; and

WHEREAS, when SFC Martland's actions became known at the highest levels of the Department of Defense, he was quickly sent home from Afghanistan, and adverse personnel actions were initiated against him for intervening to rescue the Afghan boy and his mother; and

WHEREAS, members of the Afghan National Army and the local community approved of and supported SFC Martland's actions in defense of this young boy and his mother; and

WHEREAS, Representative Duncan Hunter (R-CA) corresponded with Secretary of Defense Ash Carter, calling SFC Martland's actions a "moral decision" and saying SFC Martland had no choice but to respond or let the atrocities continue, stating that, "It's sad to think that a child rapist is put above one of our elite military operators"; and

WHEREAS, SFC Martland's service is in keeping with the highest traditions of military service; his actions reflected favorably upon the United States Army and contributed materially to the success of his unit's mission; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Sergeant First Class Charles Martland, USA, for his service and his defense of an innocent child and his mother in Afghanistan; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare copies of this resolution for presentation to Sergeant First Class Charles Martland, USA, and Secretary of Defense Ash Carter as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for SFC Martland's valiant and honorable service.

INTRODUCED

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