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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 170

Offered January 20, 2010

Commending Virginia Task Force 1.

Patrons—Scott, J.M., Abbitt, Abbott, Albo, Alexander, Armstrong, BaCote, Barlow, Bell, Robert B., Brink, Bulova, Byron, Carr, Comstock, Ebbin, Englin, Greason, Herring, Hope, Hugo, James, Janis, Joannou, Johnson, Keam, Kory, LeMunyon, Lewis, McClellan, McQuinn, Miller, P.J., Morgan, Morrissey, Phillips, Plum, Pollard, Rust, Sickles, Spruill, Surovell, Torian, Toscano, Tyler, Ward, Ware, O., Ware, R.L. and Watts

WHEREAS, Virginia Task Force 1, an elite urban search and rescue team sponsored by the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department, deployed on January 13, 2010, to Port-au-Prince, Haiti, in response to the devastating 7.0 earthquake that hit the country on January 12; and

WHEREAS, established in 1986, Virginia Task Force 1 is comprised of approximately 200 specially trained career and volunteer fire and rescue personnel with expertise in the rescue of victims from collapsed structures; and

WHEREAS, the team is comprised of emergency managers and planners, physicians and paramedics, and specialists in the fields of structural engineering, heavy rigging, collapse rescue, logistics, hazardous materials, communications, and canine and technical search; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Task Force 1 has partnerships with the Department of Homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency for domestic response and the United States Agency for International Development/Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance during international missions; and

WHEREAS, the task force sent to Haiti is composed of 72 personnel: six search and rescue canines, search and technical rescue personnel, physicians, paramedics, structural engineers, other support personnel, and approximately 48 tons of rescue equipment and supplies; the team is self-sustaining for approximately 14 days; and

WHEREAS, the task force took two planes and landed at the one operational runway at the Port-au-Prince airport and has begun the difficult and demanding job of looking for survivors of the earthquake; and

WHEREAS, the task force was deployed to the Haitian town of Petionville, near the capital of Port-au-Prince for a school collapse in November of 2008 and has also deployed nationally and internationally to the Oklahoma City Bombing, The Pentagon, Hurricanes Katrina and Isabel, the bombing in Kenya, and earthquakes in Turkey, Taiwan, and Iran; and

WHEREAS, a world class urban rescue team, Virginia Task Force 1 is comprised of paid professional firefighters and paramedics from Fairfax County and volunteers; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Virginia Task Force 1 for its readiness and response to the Haitian earthquake; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Virginia Task Force 1 as an expression of the General Assembly's respect, admiration, and gratitude for the team's readiness and service in times of crisis.

INTRODUCED

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