

2010 SESSION

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 316

Offered February 19, 2010

Commending Thomas Owens.

Patrons—Bulova and Sherwood; Senators: Petersen and Vogel

WHEREAS, Thomas Owens, the outstanding City of Fairfax fire chief, retired February 1, 2010; and
WHEREAS, the son of a fire chief, Thomas (Tom) Owens always aspired to work in fire services
and began his career as an intern at the age of 16 at the Sterling Volunteer Fire Department; and

WHEREAS, after graduating from Broad Run High School in Ashburn and receiving an associate's
degree from Northern Virginia Community College, Tom Owens worked for the Prince William County
fire department before returning to the Sterling Fire Department; and

WHEREAS, an exemplary administrator, Tom Owens quickly rose through the ranks to become the
Sterling Fire Department fire chief before moving to Winchester as the first director of the then newly
formed Frederick County Fire and Rescue Department; and

WHEREAS, in 1998 Tom Owens came to the City of Fairfax as assistant fire chief of operations and
was promoted to fire chief in 2003; and

WHEREAS, Chief Owens made public education, preparedness, and action his top priorities; he
established the Office of Emergency Management within the fire department to prepare and protect city
residents from the effects of disasters; and

WHEREAS, Chief Owens also created a life safety education program to increase fire safety
education for children and seniors and a citizen-based Community Emergency Response Team; and

WHEREAS, Chief Owens increased staffing levels for each station's fire suppression units and lead
the expansion of the city's public safety training center; and

WHEREAS, respected and admired by his colleagues and city administration, Chief Owens worked
diligently to strengthen the relationship between career and volunteer fire personnel and continued the
fire department's strong relationship with the mayor and City Council; and

WHEREAS, while Chief Owens will be departing the City of Fairfax, he leaves behind an even more
effective and efficient City of Fairfax fire department; and

WHEREAS, Chief Owens will bring his expertise and experience to Frederick, Maryland, as director
of the Division of Fire and Rescue Services; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby
commend a dedicated fire services professional, Thomas Owens; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution
for presentation to Thomas Owens as an expression of the General Assembly's respect and admiration
for his contributions to public safety in the City of Fairfax and the Commonwealth.

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