

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 385

Commending the Virginia National Guard.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 28, 2014
Agreed to by the Senate, March 3, 2014

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, four soldiers from the Virginia Beach-based 1945th Contingency Contracting Team mobilized in February 2014 for federal active duty in Afghanistan, two soldiers from the Fort Pickett-based 134th Chaplain Support Team mobilized for federal active duty in January 2014, and 10 soldiers from the Sandston-based Detachment 26, Operational Support Airlift Command mobilized for federal active duty in Afghanistan in November 2013; and

WHEREAS, about 150 soldiers from the Emporia-based 1710th Transportation Company returned to the United States in February 2014 after serving on federal active duty since April 1, 2013, where they conducted transportation support operations at Kandahar Airfield in Afghanistan; the 192nd Fighter Wing supported two overseas F-22 Raptor fighter aircraft deployments providing critical air dominance capabilities to combatant commands in key areas of the world and mobilized 38 airmen in support of global intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance operations around the world; and additional soldiers and airmen conducted individual federal mobilizations supporting global operations; and

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

WHEREAS, more than 600 Virginia National Guard soldiers and airmen and members of the Virginia Defense Force supported the 57th Presidential Inauguration on January 21, 2013, in Washington, D.C., and Northern Virginia, and more than 160 Virginia National Guard personnel mobilized for state active duty on March 6, 2013, in direct support to the Virginia State Police and other state and local emergency response agencies conducting operations after heavy snow blanketed the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, several Virginia National Guard units received national recognition in 2013: the Virginia Beach-based 229th Military Police Company received the Pershing Trophy from the National Guard Association of the United States as the National Guard unit with the top marksmanship skills in the country; the Gate City-based 1032nd Transportation Company won the Department of the Army Philip A. Connelly Award for Excellence in Army Food Service; the Virginia Beach-based 529th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion received the Reckord Trophy for the highest state of readiness in the country from the National Guard Association of the United States; and the Lynchburg-based 1st Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment received the Kerwin Readiness Award as the most combat-ready Army National Guard battalion in the country from the Association of the United States Army; and

WHEREAS, the Petersburg-based Funeral Honors Program performed at its 10,000th military funeral on February 13, 2013, and has conducted more than 12,500 total; and

WHEREAS, the State Partnership Program celebrated 10 years of working with the armed forces of the Republic of Tajikistan to the benefit of both forces on July 31, 2013; 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, the all-volunteer 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 to assist state and local authorities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Virginia National Guard and its dedicated soldiers, airmen, and civilian employees for

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their devotion to duty and their many outstanding and valuable contributions to the defense of the United States and the Commonwealth; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Major General Daniel E. Long, Jr., adjutant general of Virginia, on behalf of the patriotic soldiers, airmen, and civilian employees under his command as an expression of the General Assembly's gratitude for their dedication to the citizens of the Commonwealth, the nation, and the world.