

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES.

Honoring the firefighters and other public servants who responded to the fire in Charleston, South Carolina on June 18, 2007.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. GRAHAM (for himself, Mr. DEMINT, Mr. DODD, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. KERRY, Mr. ISAKSON, Mrs. DOLE, and Mr. BURR) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on _____

RESOLUTION

Honoring the firefighters and other public servants who responded to the fire in Charleston, South Carolina on June 18, 2007.

Whereas at approximately 7:00 P.M. on June 18, 2007, a tragic fire started at the Sofa Super Store in Charleston, South Carolina;

Whereas despite the flames that engulfed the building, the brave men and women of the Charleston Fire Department (Department) fulfilled their duty by rushing inside as others fled for their lives;

Whereas the fire quickly grew out of control and trapped 2 store employees inside;

Whereas the firefighters attempted to punch through the building walls in a selfless effort to save the lives of these employees;

Whereas the roof of the building collapsed, trapping the firefighters inside;

Whereas Captain William “Billy” Hutchinson, a 30-year veteran of the Department, lost his life in the fire;

Whereas Captain Mike Benke, a 20-year veteran of the Department, lost his life in the fire;

Whereas Captain Louis Mulkey, an 11-year veteran of the Department, lost his life in the fire;

Whereas Engineer Mark Kelsey, a 12-year veteran of the Department, lost his life in the fire;

Whereas Engineer Bradford “Brad” Baity, a 9-year veteran of the Department, lost his life in the fire;

Whereas Assistant Engineer Michael French, a 1 ½ -year veteran of the Department, lost his life in the fire;

Whereas Fire Fighter James “Earl” Drayton, a 32-year veteran of the Department, lost his life in the fire;

Whereas Fire Fighter Brandon Thompson, a 4-year veteran of the Department, lost his life in the fire;

Whereas Fire Fighter Melven Champaign, a 2-year veteran of the Department, lost his life in the fire;

Whereas the extraordinary courage and sacrifice of these firefighters reflects the spirit of South Carolina, as well as the spirit of our great Nation;

Whereas the United States has not experienced such a devastating loss of firefighters since the horrific events on September 11, 2001; and

Whereas a grateful Nation mourns the loss of these heroes
and vows that their sacrifices were not made in vain:
Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) honors William “Billy” Hutchinson, Mike
3 Benke, Louis Mulkey, Mark Kelsey, Bradford
4 “Brad”Baity, Michael French, James “Earl”
5 Drayton, Brandon Thompson, and Melven Cham-
6 paign, who lost their lives in the course of their duty
7 as firefighters, and recognizes them for their bravery
8 and sacrifice;

9 (2) extends its deepest sympathy to the families
10 of these 9 brave heroes;

11 (3) honors all the firefighters and other public
12 servants who contributed to battling the fire; and

13 (4) pledges to continue to support and to work
14 on behalf of the firefighters who risk their lives each
15 day to ensure the safety of all Americans.