

Senate Resolution 1399

By: Senator Douglas of the 17th

## A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing and commending Dawn and Marshall Atha; and for other purposes.

2 WHEREAS, Dawn and Marshall Atha made a commitment to obtaining bullet proof vests  
3 for each officer of the Newton County Sheriff's Office after their son, Deputy Wesley Atha,  
4 was shot; and

5 WHEREAS, Deputy Atha's life was spared because he was wearing a bullet-proof vest, but  
6 Mrs. Atha learned that the vest he was wearing did not have the stopping power  
7 recommended to adequately protect today's officers; and

8 WHEREAS, with their creation of the Vest Fund, the Athas collected over \$90,000 in  
9 donations from members of the Newton County community; and

10 WHEREAS, in addition to the incredible generosity of the Newton County community, the  
11 Newton County Sheriff's Office obtained a grant from the United States Department of  
12 Justice's Bulletproof Vest Partnership; and

13 WHEREAS, numerous local businesses and residents contributed over \$1,000 each to the  
14 Vest Fund, including Ginn Chevrolet; Ginn Chrysler-Jeep-Dodge; Newton Federal; Marshall  
15 and Dawn Atha; the Arnold Fund; John and Diane Bowers; Newton County Community  
16 Partnership; Robert R. Fowler III; Newton Baptist Church; Covington Elks Lodge 1806 and  
17 Elkadettes; Newton County Republican Party; Ed, Charley, and Rachael Needham; Beaver  
18 Manufacturing; Mary Jane Dixon; Bethlehem Baptist Church; Lisa Hayes; First Presbyterian  
19 Church; Chick-fil-A; the Rotary Club of Covington Foundation; SRG Global; Bobby and  
20 Jean Thomas; Caldwell & Cowan Funeral Home and Lawnwood Memorial Park; and Chase  
21 Cain Memorial Scholarship Fund; and

22 WHEREAS, to date, 99 new vests have been ordered with 57 more slated to be ordered in  
23 the near future, giving 156 officers assurance and peace of mind that the vests they are  
24 wearing will provide the best protection available; and

25 WHEREAS, what was once a tragic and frightening event has turned into a community-wide  
26 effort to ensure that those hired to protect and serve the people of Newton County are safer  
27 if they find themselves in harm's way.

28 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body  
29 recognize Dawn and Marshall Atha for their commitment to ensuring the safety of officers  
30 in the Newton County Sheriff's Office and commend their initiative and determination to  
31 make a difference in their community.

32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed  
33 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to Dawn and Marshall Atha.