

## House Resolution 22EX

By: Representatives Ralston of the 7<sup>th</sup>, Powell of the 171<sup>st</sup>, Bearden of the 68<sup>th</sup>, Meadows of the 5<sup>th</sup>, Willard of the 49<sup>th</sup>, and others

## A RESOLUTION

1 Commending Colonel William "Bill" Hitchens for his many years of dedicated public service  
2 and inviting him to be recognized by the House of Representatives; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, William "Bill" Hitchens' career spans 45 years of government service in the  
4 military and state law enforcement. He served four years in the Marine Corps, which  
5 included a 13 month stint in Vietnam, and 28 years on the Georgia State Patrol (GSP) prior  
6 to his retirement in 1997. At the time of his retirement from the GSP, he held the rank of  
7 major and was the South Division Adjutant. In that position he was responsible for all State  
8 Patrol law enforcement activities in the southern half of the state and he reported directly to  
9 the Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety; and

10 WHEREAS, after retiring from the GSP, he worked three years with the Governor's Criminal  
11 Justice Coordinating Council as a law enforcement consultant, where his primary  
12 responsibility was working with the 30 federally funded multi-jurisdictional drug task forces  
13 in Georgia; and

14 WHEREAS, throughout most of his career with the GSP, Colonel Hitchens maintained a  
15 parallel career with the Coast Guard Reserve. Although primarily involved with Readiness  
16 and Port Contingency Planning, he also served two tours as the Executive Officer of Coast  
17 Guard Reserve Unit Air Station Savannah. During the Muriel boatlift in 1980, he was called  
18 to active duty and worked in the Coast Guard's Communications Center in Miami. He was  
19 later activated twice for Operation Desert Storm. Colonel Hitchens retired from the Coast  
20 Guard Reserve with the rank of commander (0-5); and

21 WHEREAS, in January of 2003, Governor Perdue selected Bill Hitchens to be the first  
22 director of the Georgia Office of Homeland Security. In a realignment of the state's law  
23 enforcement agencies, Hitchens' role was to serve as the point person for all homeland  
24 security issues in the State of Georgia; and

25 WHEREAS, in December of 2004, Governor Perdue nominated Bill Hitchens to be the  
26 Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Public Safety and the Colonel of the State  
27 Patrol. The Georgia Board of Public Safety unanimously approved his appointment with an  
28 effective date of December 16, 2004; and

29 WHEREAS, for his civic, military, and law enforcement efforts through the years, Colonel  
30 Hitchens has received several awards, including: Savannah Metropolitan Police Officer of  
31 the Year in 1978, Effingham County Police Officer of the Year in 1978, The T. Malone  
32 Sharpe Memorial Award as the Outstanding Local Chapter President in the Georgia Jaycees  
33 in 1979, Outstanding Military Citizen of Georgia Award in 1988, the Georgia State Patrol's  
34 Meritorious Service Award for his actions in Centennial Park immediately after the bombing  
35 in 1996, the Arthur Hutchins Memorial Award as the Georgia Peace Officer of the Year for  
36 Meritorious Service in 2004, the Governor's Customer Service Award for Leadership in  
37 2009, the Governor's Public Safety award in 2010, and Member of the Year for the Georgia  
38 Chapter of the FBI National Academy Associates in 2011; and

39 WHEREAS, Colonel Hitchens has been married to his wife Norma for 42 years and they  
40 have four children and ten grandchildren. Norma and Bill are members of the Baptist Church  
41 at Ebenezer.

42 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that  
43 the members of this body commend Colonel William "Bill" Hitchens for his many years of  
44 dedicated public service and invite him to be recognized by the House of Representatives on  
45 such date and at such time as to be determined by the Speaker of the House of  
46 Representatives.

47 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized  
48 and directed to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to Colonel William "Bill"  
49 Hitchens.