

House Resolution 1709

By: Representatives Burns of the 159th and Hitchens of the 161st

A RESOLUTION

1 Commending Corporal Connie Morris and Sergeant Bruce Cleveland and recognizing them
2 upon being chosen as the 2015 Peace Officers of the Year for Valor; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, on May 12, 2015, Stephens County deputies were dispatched to a multi-vehicle
4 accident on Highway 106, south of Toccoa, Georgia, and Corporal Connie Morris and
5 Sergeant Bruce Cleveland, from the Traffic/Crime Suppression Unit, were the first to arrive
6 at the scene; and

7 WHEREAS, upon their arrival, the deputies observed a child on a blanket beside the road,
8 already being tended to, and flames appearing at the point of collision, with one of the three
9 cars involved already engulfed in flames; and

10 WHEREAS, Sergeant Cleveland attempted to tame the raging fire with a fire extinguisher,
11 but the extreme flames would not allow Corporal Morris to reach the driver of the flame
12 engulfed car, who was already deceased; and

13 WHEREAS, Corporal Morris then approached the second car and found a pulse on the
14 driver, who was pinned inside the vehicle, and with the help of bystanders began pulling on
15 the window in an effort to free the victim; and

16 WHEREAS, unable to separate the vehicles, and fearing full flame engulfment of both
17 vehicles, the deputies made the decision to extricate the driver, though it risked inflicting
18 additional injuries; and

19 WHEREAS, Sergeant Cleveland fought back the flames long enough to allow Corporal
20 Morris, a volunteer firefighter, and other rescuers to work and to break the steeringwheel off,
21 pulling the victim from the vehicle in a feat of unimaginable strength; and

22 WHEREAS, the rescued victim was airlifted for immediate treatment, suffering broken arms,
23 legs, a collapsed lung, and a ruptured pancreas, but survived because of the swift and heroic
24 actions of Corporal Connie Morris and Sergeant Bruce Cleveland, along with others who
25 assisted in the rescue; and

26 WHEREAS, because of their brave and selfless acts, they have been selected as the 2015
27 Officers of the Year for Valor, nominated by Sheriff Randy Shirley of the Stephens County
28 Sheriff's Office.

29 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
30 the members of this body commend Corporal Connie Morris and Sergeant Bruce Cleveland
31 for their heroic actions and recognize them upon being selected as the 2015 Peace Officers
32 of the Year for Valor.

33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
34 and directed to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to
35 Corporal Connie Morris and Sergeant Bruce Cleveland.