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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 355

Offered February 6, 2025

*Celebrating the life of Frank Earnest Atwell, Jr.*

Patron—Hackworth

WHEREAS, Frank Earnest Atwell, Jr., a longtime member of the Smyth County Sheriff's Office, died on December 21, 2024; and

WHEREAS, Earnest "Ernie" Atwell grew up in Smyth County and proudly served the nation for four years as a member of the United States Navy; and

WHEREAS, after returning home, Ernie Atwell joined the Smyth County Sheriff's Office and held several leadership roles over the course of his distinguished 25-year career, including as a K-9 officer, road deputy, and road captain; and

WHEREAS, Ernie Atwell notably served the community as a school resource officer at Sugar Grove Elementary School, where he formed strong bonds with faculty and staff members and was a trusted mentor to students; and

WHEREAS, Ernie Atwell inspired others through his compassion, kindness, and dedication to servant leadership; he gave generously of his time and talents to support community initiatives, and he was an active member of the Smyth County Moose Lodge No. 1004; and

WHEREAS, outside of his career, Ernie Atwell loved spending time with family and friends at his cabin, and he made many lasting memories with them at Wythe Raceway; and

WHEREAS, Ernie Atwell will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his wife of 17 years, Melissa; his children, Frank, Ethan, Elliott, Abigayle, and Asher, and their families; his parents, Frank and Lydia; and numerous other family members and friends; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby note with great sadness the loss of Frank Earnest Atwell, Jr., a highly admired law-enforcement officer in Smyth County; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Frank Earnest Atwell, Jr., as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

INTRODUCED

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