

2025 SESSION

ENROLLED

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 355

Celebrating the life of Frank Earnest Atwell, Jr.

Agreed to by the Senate, February 13, 2025
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 17, 2025

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.

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