

1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 14

2 INTRODUCED BY F. GARNER, J. WELBORN

3
4 A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF
5 MONTANA URGING CONGRESS TO CATEGORIZE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATORS AS A
6 PROTECTIVE SERVICE OCCUPATION UNDER THE FEDERAL STANDARD OCCUPATIONAL
7 CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM.

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9 WHEREAS, public safety telecommunicators play a critical role in emergency response; and

10 WHEREAS, the work public safety telecommunicators perform goes far beyond merely relaying
11 information between the public and first responders; and

12 WHEREAS, when responding to reports of missing, abducted, and sexually exploited children, the
13 information obtained and actions taken by public safety telecommunicators form the foundation for an effective
14 response; and

15 WHEREAS, when a hostage taker or suicidal person calls 9-1-1, the first contact is with the public
16 safety telecommunicator whose negotiation skills can prevent the situation from getting worse; and

17 WHEREAS, during active shooter incidents, public safety telecommunicators coach callers through first
18 aid and give advice to prevent further harm, all while collecting vital information to provide situational
19 awareness for responding officers; and

20 WHEREAS, when police officers, firefighters, and emergency medical technicians are being shot at,
21 their calls for help go to public safety telecommunicators; and

22 WHEREAS, public safety telecommunicators are often communicating with people in great distress,
23 harm, fear, or injury, while employing their experience and training to recognize a critical piece of information;
24 and

25 WHEREAS, in fact, there have been incidents in which public safety telecommunicators, recognizing
26 the sound of a racked shotgun, have prevented serious harm or death of law enforcement officers who would
27 have otherwise walked into a trap; and

28 WHEREAS, the work of public safety telecommunicators comes with an extreme emotional and

1 physical impact that is compounded by long hours and the around-the-clock nature of the job; and

2 WHEREAS, research has suggested that public safety telecommunicators are exposed to trauma that
3 may lead to the development of posttraumatic stress disorder; and

4 WHEREAS, recognizing the risks associated with exposure to traumatic events, some agencies
5 provide critical incident stress debriefing teams to lessen the psychological impact and accelerate recovery for
6 public safety telecommunicators and first responders, alike; and

7 WHEREAS, the federal Standard Occupational Classification System is designed and maintained
8 solely for statistical purposes, and is used by federal statistical agencies to classify workers and jobs into
9 occupational categories for the purpose of collecting, calculating, analyzing, or disseminating data; and

10 WHEREAS, the federal occupations in the Standard Occupational Classification System are classified
11 based on work performed and, in some cases, on the skills, education, or training needed to perform the work;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, classifying public safety telecommunicators as protective service occupations would
14 correct an inaccurate representation in the Standard Occupational Classification System, recognize these
15 professionals for the lifesaving work they perform, and better align the Standard Occupational Classification
16 System with related classification systems.

17
18 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF
19 THE STATE OF MONTANA:

20 (1) That the 67th Senate and House of Representatives of Montana maintain standing support of
21 public safety telecommunicators.

22 (2) That the 67th Senate and House of Representatives of Montana urge the United States Congress
23 to pass legislation to categorize public safety telecommunicators as a protective service occupation under the
24 Standard Occupational Classification System.

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of State send a copy of this resolution to the
26 President of the United States, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the Majority and
27 Minority Leaders of the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate, and to each
28 member of the Montana Congressional Delegation.

