

118TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. RES. 1185

Designating the month of May as “National First Responder Month”.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 30, 2024

Mr. NEWHOUSE (for himself, Mr. BOST, Mr. D’ESPOSITO, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Ms. HOULAHAN, and Mr. SMITH of Nebraska) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

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## RESOLUTION

Designating the month of May as “National First Responder Month”.

Whereas first responders are police officers, peace officers, deputy sheriffs, correctional officers, local, State, Federal, and Tribal law enforcement officers, firefighters, emergency dispatchers, public safety telecommunicators, emergency medical technicians, paramedics, and nurses, who, in the course of their professional duties, respond to fire, medical, hazardous material, or other similar emergencies;

Whereas “International Firefighters Day”, “National Peace Officers Memorial Day”, “National Nurses Week”, “National Police Week”, “National EMS Week”, and “Na-

tional Correctional Officers Week” are annually celebrated in May;

Whereas, according to the Department of Commerce, in the United States there are approximately 4,600,000 first responders;

Whereas, during times of medical crisis, first responders are critical in providing emergency medical services to disadvantaged communities such as older adults, people with disabilities, limited access to transportation, and those with minimal English-language proficiency;

Whereas first responders have worked on the frontlines of national emergencies and crises for centuries including the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, Hurricane Katrina, the opioid epidemic, and the COVID-19 pandemic;

Whereas, according to the Department of Transportation, emergency medical service personnel respond to around 37,000,000 9-1-1 calls annually;

Whereas, according to the Indian Health Service, about 60,000 emergency medical service trips are made every year on reservations, particularly in rural and extremely remote locations, for Tribal members;

Whereas first responders in rural communities often require additional specialized training given emergency response is sometimes a secondary occupation;

Whereas, according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, factors such as training demands, unmet expectations, work-life balance, consolidations, mergers, and regionalization, tension with local government, leadership, and departmental culture have contributed to serious re-

cruitment and retention challenges in the first responder industry;

Whereas, according to the Department of Labor, 25 percent of police officers, 19 percent of firefighters, and 10 percent of emergency medical technicians are veterans of the United States Armed Forces;

Whereas, according to the Department of Health and Human Services, an estimated 30 percent of first responders will develop some behavioral health condition in their lifetime compared to 20 percent of the general population;

Whereas, according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, approximately 1 in 3 first responders will develop post-traumatic stress disorder in their lifetime;

Whereas, according to the United States Fire Administration, first responders suffer from significantly higher suicide rates compared to other occupations;

Whereas, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, first responder suicides are predominantly committed by law enforcement officers, firefighters, and emergency medical service providers; and

Whereas many first responder peer support programs exist to assist in reducing the stigma associated with mental health struggles and enhance comfortability in approaching fellow colleagues for assistance: Now, therefore, be it

1       *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2               (1) expresses support for the designation of

3       “National First Responder Month”;

1           (2) honors and recognizes the service and sac-  
2           rifice made by first responders and the families of  
3           first responders; and

4           (3) encourages the people of the United States  
5           to observe “National First Responder Month” by—

6                   (A) celebrating the lives of those first re-  
7                   sponders who have been injured or lost their  
8                   lives in the line of duty;

9                   (B) thanking first responders, both part-  
10                  time, full-time, and volunteer, for their contin-  
11                  ued commitment to their community and the  
12                  Nation; and

13                  (C) conducting well-deserved ceremonies  
14                  and activities to pay tribute to first responders  
15                  and their families.

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