



1           WHEREAS, public service came naturally to Chris Lawton, his father was also a  
2 volunteer fire chief; and

3           WHEREAS, a graduate of Zachary High School in 1995, Chris began his career as  
4 a firefighter the following year at the Baton Rouge District Six Fire Department on Prescott  
5 Road along with Fire Marshal Butch Browning, who was then a chief; and

6           WHEREAS, Deputy Chief Chris Lawton joined the Zachary Fire Department in  
7 1998, earned the rank of captain, received his fire science associate degree from the Carrol  
8 L. Herring Fire and Emergency Training Institute at LSU, and he also served the department  
9 as an arson investigator; and

10          WHEREAS, Chris was a "double hero" having served his community as both a  
11 firefighter and reserve policeman; and

12          WHEREAS, in 2008, Chris joined the Zachary Police Department as a fully certified  
13 reserve officer, which is a volunteer position, where he worked part time and without pay  
14 for the last decade; he logged more than two thousand hours as a reserve officer; and

15          WHEREAS, during his career, Chief Lawton received numerous acknowledgments  
16 that included Medical Life Saves, Fire Stops, and Unit and Crew Citations; in 2014, Chris  
17 was the recipient of a medical lifesaver award after rendering aid to a heart attack victim  
18 while he and his family were on vacation in Mexico; and

19          WHEREAS, Chief Lawton shall be remembered as a motivator who shared his  
20 expertise with his coworkers, placing particular emphasis on the credo "to protect and  
21 serve"; he was always "on the job", twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week, and was  
22 well-respected by his peers; and

23          WHEREAS, Chris, "always wanting to learn", graduated from the Leadership North  
24 training program for local leaders organized by the Zachary Chamber of Commerce, was  
25 certified as a Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) firearms instructor, and worked  
26 along side Zachary police detectives on high level investigations; and

27          WHEREAS, Chris had a generous spirit; he volunteered at community events, at  
28 charity fundraisers, and at his church, Zachary United Methodist, to build wheelchair ramps  
29 or cut lawns for the elderly; and

30          WHEREAS, Chief Lawton was a founding member of Local #4644 of the Zachary

1 Firefighters Association and a member of International Association of Arson Investigators;  
2 and

3 WHEREAS, at his funeral, Chief Chris Lawton was honored on behalf of a grateful  
4 nation with an honor guard and a procession of fellow firefighters and law enforcement  
5 officers from across the country who paid homage to their fallen comrade and accompanied  
6 him to his final rest; and

7 WHEREAS, the lengthy procession of first-responders escorted Chief Lawton passed  
8 the police station and the fire station along Main Street and passed an American flag hung  
9 between two crisscrossed ladder trucks with thousands of mourners who lined the street and  
10 held flags; and

11 WHEREAS, community leaders honored the memory of Chief Chris Lawton; the  
12 Zachary City Council had a moment of silence to memorialize his service; Baton Rouge  
13 Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome ordered all flags at city-parish buildings be flown  
14 at half-staff; and he received dual funeral honors, In the Line of Duty Police Officer Death  
15 Honors as well as Active Duty Fire Department Death Honors; and

16 WHEREAS, Chief Chris Lawton is survived by his loving wife, Shannon; their  
17 children, Marshall and Claire; and a host of extended family and loving friends; and

18 WHEREAS, Chris Lawton had a profound effect on the people he loved and the  
19 community he served and he shall be remembered for his service, bravery, and sacrifice; and

20 WHEREAS, as his comrades-in-arms will note, Deputy Chief Chris Lawton is now  
21 10-7; he is at the End of Watch; and he has gone to his heavenly home to be at peace with  
22 his savior, Jesus Christ.

23 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby  
24 express heartfelt condolences to the family, friends, fellow firefighters and law enforcement  
25 officers of Deputy Chief Chris Lawton of Zachary, who died doing his best in the line of  
26 duty as a reserve police officer on March 12, 2018.

27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby note  
28 his dedication to the noble calling of both fire protection and law enforcement, his character  
29 and humanity, and his sacrifice, and does hereby make evident the enduring appreciation and  
30 gratitude of the people of the state of Louisiana.

