

No. R-369. Senate concurrent resolution honoring the outstanding former Williston Fire Chief Kenneth Morton Jr.

(S.C.R.11)

Offered by Senators Lyons, Chittenden, and Ram Hinsdale,

Offered by Representatives Arsenault of Williston, Brady of Williston, and Burkhardt of South Burlington,

Whereas, in 1982, the Town of Williston still retained a significant rural character with 11 farms, no buildings higher than two floors, no senior housing facilities, and absolutely no box stores or large shopping centers, and, by 2020, the municipality was highly suburbanized, and

Whereas, to serve this community, which inevitably embarked on a transformative change from semirural to overwhelmingly suburban, there existed a fire department consisting of an exclusively volunteer force, and

Whereas, that year, Ken Morton, whose firefighting experience began a decade earlier as a Norwich University freshman, joined the Williston Fire Department, which responded to 104 emergency calls during his inaugural year, and

Whereas, as Williston grew to a town of approximately 10,000 residents with all the suburban attributes it lacked in 1982, the selectboard and the citizens supported a major metamorphosis in the fire department's organizational structure and services, and

Whereas, in 1992, the Town of Williston appointed Ken Morton as fire chief, and his great leadership and guidance for the next 28 years propelled the department to new heights, and

Whereas, during former Chief Ken Morton's tenure, the Williston Fire Department increased its staff to 16 career and 16 on-call firefighters; in 2000, the department established an emergency medical service, replacing the preexisting nonprofit organization; in 2010, the Town of Williston expanded this service to include ambulance transport, and it now offers paramedicine-level care; in 2007, a large modern new fire station opened and over the years the vehicle fleet has been updated; and, by 2020, the department was responding to over 2,000 annual emergency calls, and

Whereas, Chief Ken Morton was widely respected among his professional peers across Vermont and left an extraordinary legacy of firefighting excellence, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly honors the outstanding former Williston Fire Chief Kenneth Morton Jr., *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Ken Morton and the Williston Fire Department.