

1 HJR305  
2 177219-2  
3 By Representatives Sanderford, Baker and Rowe  
4 RFD: Rules  
5 First Read: 19-APR-16

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ENROLLED, House Joint Resolution,

COMMENDING SERGEANT JOE COTNER OF THE MOBILE POLICE DEPARTMENT AS A NOMINEE FOR THE 2016 ALABAMA LEGISLATIVE MEDAL OF HONOR FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT.

WHEREAS, it is with highest commendation that we recognize Sergeant Joe Cotner of the Mobile Police Department as a nominee for the 2016 Alabama Legislative Medal of Honor for Law Enforcement, Alabama's highest law enforcement award for extraordinary courage in the line of duty; and

WHEREAS, on March 2, 2015, Sergeant Cotner was advised by a parent of unsafe conditions and potential abuse at Saving Youth Foundation, a residential treatment center; and

WHEREAS, Sergeant Cotner interviewed the parent and her daughter, who had been removed from the facility, and determined that more information was needed; he coordinated with the Department of Human Resources and the Mobile County Health Department to inspect the facility and interview some of the children in residence; during this process, it was discovered that the living conditions were unsanitary with multiple code and food violations, the care was deficient to the point of a systematic pattern of willful neglect and abuse by the staff; and

1           WHEREAS, as a result of Sergeant Cotner's instincts  
2 to follow up and thoroughly investigate, 36 children were  
3 rescued and removed from the facility, three staff were  
4 charged with 24 counts of Aggravated Child Abuse, and the  
5 facility was closed; due to the action of Sergeant Cotner,  
6 associated residential treatment facilities in other states  
7 are being investigated for similar issues; and

8           WHEREAS, Sergeant Cotner demonstrated courage,  
9 diligence, and responsibility in an adversarial situation; his  
10 loyalty and unwavering commitment to protect and serve the  
11 residents of Mobile were evidenced through his willingness to  
12 take steps to insure these children were removed from a  
13 situation that was unsafe, abusive, and potentially dangerous;  
14 and

15           WHEREAS, Sergeant Joe Cotner epitomizes the  
16 qualities of those who serve and protect, and he is truly  
17 deserving of this distinguished nomination for the Legislative  
18 Medal of Honor for Law Enforcement; now therefore,

19           BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH  
20 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That we hereby recognize and honor  
21 Sergeant Joe Cotner as a nominee for the 2016 Legislative  
22 Medal of Honor for Law Enforcement and direct that he receive  
23 a copy of this resolution as evidence of our admiration and  
24 esteem.

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Speaker of the House of Representatives

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President and Presiding Officer of the Senate

House of Representatives

I hereby certify that the within Act originated in  
and was adopted by the House 20-APR-16.

Jeff Woodard  
Clerk

Senate

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27-APR-16

Adopted