**South Carolina General Assembly**

126th Session, 2025-2026

**S. 553**

**STATUS INFORMATION**

Concurrent Resolution

Sponsors: Senator Alexander

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Introduced in the Senate on April 15, 2025

Currently residing in the House

Summary: Medal of Valor-Oconee County Corporal Lucas Watts, Captain Thomas Crompton, Lieutenant Justin Murphy, Corporal Chris Johnson, and

**HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

 Date Body Action Description with journal page number

 4/15/2025 Senate Introduced, adopted, sent to House (Senate Journal‑page 9)

View the latest  [legislative information](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/billsearch.php?billnumbers=553&session=126&summary=B)  at the website

**VERSIONS OF THIS BILL**

[04/15/2025](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess126_2025-2026/prever/553_20250415.docx)

A concurrent RESOLUTION

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR Corporal Lucas Watts, Captain Thomas Crompton, Lieutenant Justin Murphy, Corporal Chris Johnson, Staff Sergeant Charles Mulwee, and First Sergeant David Carr, all OF THE Oconee COUNTY SHERIFF’S OFFICE, and Deputy First Class Tyler Bishop of the Pickens County Sheriff’s Office FOR EXCEPTIONAL COURAGE IN THE FACE OF DANGER WHILE IN THE LINE OF DUTY AND TO CONGRATULATE THEM UPON RECEIVING THE SOUTH CAROLINA SHERIFFS’ ASSOCIATION 2024 MEDAL OF VALOR AWARD.

Whereas, the South Carolina General Assembly is pleased to learn that Corporal Lucas Watts, Captain Thomas Crompton, Lieutenant Justin Murphy, Corporal Chris Johnson, Staff Sergeant Charles Mulwee, First Sergeant David Carr, and Deputy First Class Tyler Bishop will be awarded the esteemed South Carolina Sheriffs’ Association 2024 Medal of Valor Award during the association’s awards banquet in Columbia on April 23, 2025; and

Whereas, the Medal of Valor Award is presented to a deputy sheriff who performs actions above and beyond the call of duty; exhibits exceptional courage, extraordinary decisiveness, and presence of mind; or acts with unusual swiftness, regardless of his or her personal safety, in an attempt to save or protect human life. Nominations made by the sheriff are presented to a standing committee of sheriffs who evaluate the nominations, and recipients are presented with the medal at the awards banquet; and

Whereas, on November 16, 2023, Corporal Watts initiated a traffic stop on a truck with a tag that read PR1VATE TR-VL. Corporal Johnson arrived on the scene to assist in the traffic stop. The driver would not cooperate with Corporal Watts to produce his driver’s license and registration and asked to speak with the deputy’s supervisor. Lieutenant Murphy and Captain Crompton arrived shortly after that, and for two hours with his driver-side window lowered only two inches, the driver would not answer any questions and tried to steer the conversation to free travel and the Constitution; and

Whereas, as the deputies were placing stop sticks around the vehicle, the driver took off at high speed, driving at a speed of 100 miles an hour. Corporal Watts was first in the pursuit, followed by others on the scene. When the suspect stopped, he exited his vehicle and fired multiple shots at the deputies’ vehicles. As he returned to his vehicle, the deputies prepared to pursue him. Corporal Watts did not respond; he had been shot in the head during the exchange of gunfire; and

Whereas, Lieutenant Murphy, Corporal Johnson, and Staff Sergeant Mulwee carried Corporal Watts to Captain Crompton’s vehicle. Captain Crompton and Staff Sergeant Mulwee transported him to get medical help while Lieutenant Murphy and Corporal Johnson armed themselves with patrol rifles. First Sergeant Carr and Deputy Bishop arrived on the scene and located the suspect over the hill from the incident. After an exchange of gunfire, the suspect retreated into a travel trailer and returned with an assault-type rifle. When gunfire was exchanged again, the deputies bravely engaged the suspect, without the benefit of any covering, resulting in injuries to the suspect; and

Whereas, the South Carolina General Assembly is honored to recognize the heroism and determination of law enforcement officers and first responders like Corporal Lucas Watts, Captain Thomas Crompton, Lieutenant Justin Murphy, Corporal Chris Johnson, Staff Sergeant Charles Mulwee, First Sergeant David Carr, and Deputy First Class Tyler Bishop who protect and defend our citizens, putting the safety of others above their own personal safety. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate, the House of Representatives concurring:

That the members of the South Carolina General Assembly, by this resolution, recognize and honor Corporal Lucas Watts, Captain Thomas Crompton, Lieutenant Justin Murphy, Corporal Chris Johnson, Staff Sergeant Charles Mulwee, and First Sergeant David Carr, all of the Oconee County Sheriff’s Office, and Deputy First Class Tyler Bishop of the Pickens County Sheriff’s Office for exceptional courage in the face of danger while in the line of duty and congratulate them upon receiving the South Carolina Sheriffs’ Association 2024 Medal of Valor Award.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Corporal Lucas Watts, Captain Thomas Crompton, Lieutenant Justin Murphy, Corporal Chris Johnson, Staff Sergeant Charles Mulwee, First Sergeant David Carr, and Deputy First Class Tyler Bishop.

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