HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 2017-4649, by Representatives Buys and Van Werven

WHEREAS, Fire Chief Gary Russell has made the decision to retire after 44 years of service to the residents of Whatcom County Fire District No. 7; and

WHEREAS, During his 44 years of service, Chief Russell has been a Volunteer Firefighter, Volunteer Captain, Career Assistant Chief, and Chief of the Department for the last 31 years; and

WHEREAS, When Chief Russell became Fire Chief, he had no other career staff but the 80 volunteers to assist him; and

WHEREAS, Since that time, the organization has grown to 50 career employees and 75 volunteer employees; and

WHEREAS, Chief Russell has overseen the addition of Advanced Life Support to Fire District No. 7; and

WHEREAS, Chief Russell has watched the fire district expand to four staffed stations serving nearly 22,000 residents; and

WHEREAS, Chief Russell's passion and hard work led him to hold every office in the Whatcom County Association of Fire Chiefs over the years; and

WHEREAS, Throughout his 44 years of service, Chief Russell carried out his duties with honor and selflessness;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives express its gratitude and appreciation for Chief Gary Russell's service and encourage all residents of Whatcom County Fire District No. 7 to join in recognizing his many contributions to the community.