

ENROLLED SENATE
RESOLUTION NO. 48

By: Gumm, Adelson, Aldridge,
Anderson, Ballenger,
Barrington, Bass, Bingman,
Branan, Brogdon, Brown,
Burrage, Coates, Coffee,
Corn, Crain, Crutchfield,
Easley, Eason McIntyre,
Ellis, Ford, Garrison,
Halligan, Ivester, Johnson
(Constance), Johnson
(Mike), Jolley, Justice,
Lamb, Laster, Leftwich,
Lerblance, Marlatt, Mazzei,
Myers, Newberry, Nichols,
Paddack, Reynolds, Rice,
Russell, Schulz, Sparks,
Stanislowski, Sweeden,
Sykes, Wilson and Wyrick

A Resolution commending the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma for their support of the National Guard and Reserve; congratulating them for their selection to receive the 2008 State Pro Patria Award and the 2008 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award; and directing distribution.

WHEREAS, last year the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma earned Oklahoma's Committee of the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve's highest honor – the 2008 Pro Patria Award. The award was presented to the Choctaw Nation for superior support of its Guard and Reserve member employees. In addition to providing pay differential, 30 days' paid military leave per year, and continuing insurance, the Choctaw Nation deployed a special knife to Guard

members serving in Afghanistan and Iraq for the express purpose of slicing through packing and harness straps in emergency situations. Walkie-talkies were also sent to the 95th Reservists so that transport teams could communicate during low visibility; and

WHEREAS, the Choctaw Nation also provides "care" packages and phone cards to its serving members, friends and employees and purchased an ultrasound machine for detecting embedded shrapnel in wounded soldiers. The Choctaw Tribal Council funds a Veterans Advocacy Program, an annual Veterans Ceremony, and provided property and funding for a Veterans Cemetery. The 2008 Pro Patria Award was presented to Chief Gregory E. Pyle on Friday, February 15, 2008, in the Durant Tribal Complex auditorium; and

WHEREAS, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma also received the 2008 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award last year. The Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award is the highest recognition given by the United States Government to employers who have shown outstanding support for the Guard and Reserve. The Choctaw Nation was chosen from more than 2,100 nominations last year and is the first tribe ever to receive the award. The Choctaw Nation has been very willing to support those serving in the military, whether their role is in the National Guard, Reserve, or any other branch of armed services; and

WHEREAS, the Choctaw Nation provides emergency assistance for families while military members are deployed. The Choctaw Nation made a substantial donation to the family support group of the 120th Engineer Battalion, their adopted military unit. The Choctaw Nation also provides mailing service, complete with paid postage, to Guardsmen and Reservists and other military personnel on active duty overseas. Equipment to make Internet connections possible was provided to some of the troops in Iraq in order to stay in touch with their families. Last year the Choctaw Nation chartered 14 buses for Christmas to provide round-trip transportation for Oklahoma National Guard members serving at Fort Bliss, Texas, so they could be home for the holidays. The 2008 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award was presented to Chief Gregory E. Pyle on Friday, September 18, 2008, in Washington, D.C.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE 1ST SESSION OF THE 52ND OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE:

THAT the Oklahoma State Senate commends the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma for its support of military personnel whether they are in a branch of the regular armed services or in the National Guard and Reserve.

THAT the Oklahoma State Senate congratulates the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma for being selected as the 2008 recipient of the State Pro Patria Award and the 2008 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award for employer support of the National Guard and Reserve.

THAT a copy of this resolution be distributed to Choctaw Chief Gregory E. Pyle and Assistant Chief Gary Batton.

Adopted by the Senate the 14th day of May, 2009.

Presiding Officer of the Senate