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HENRY: BEST 9/11 REMEMBRANCE IS A SAFER CITY *Cross Training, Communications, Partnerships, Preparedness Are Pivotal to Security on the Home Front for Mayoral Candidate*

Fort Wayne, Indiana – On this day of solemn remembrance, Mayoral candidate Tom Henry reinforced his steadfast support for Fort Wayne’s first responders and urged enhancement of their public safety capabilities to better serve all citizens. While visiting the new Public Safety Academy of Northeast Indiana, he defined ways in which his administration will work to make Fort Wayne a safer city through cross training of personnel, communications’ upgrades, new partnerships and better preparedness.

“The highest honor a mayor can pay to those who lost their lives on September 11 and to their families is to ensure that every day on the home front we are working to make our neighborhoods and our city more secure, and to better prepare our emergency responders,” declared Henry. “Protecting each citizen is a mayor’s first responsibility. Our families depend on it. Our employers rely upon it. The freedom of our great nation is built upon it.”

To increase cooperation and cost savings, Henry outlined several recommendations for strengthening public safety at all levels. As part of his innovative agenda, Henry will:

- Promote cross training of firefighters to expand the number of certified paramedics in the ranks of the local fire service. Emergency medical runs represent more than 75 percent of all firefighter dispatches. Encouraging public safety professionals to acquire additional skills will better leverage scarce public resources, and will bring a higher level of expertise more quickly to those in need. All Fort Wayne firefighters are already certified as Emergency Medical Technicians;
- Champion the new Regional Public Safety Academy and all its resources, and help it to realize its extraordinary potential. The facility’s combination of exceptional academic partners, top-notch trainers and world-class facilities and technology will put local public safety personnel on the leading edge, ensure access to best practices and make Fort Wayne a national model and the anchor for training in the region;

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- Maximize the use of Fort Wayne’s state-of-the-art broadband capacity in fire stations and at the new Public Safety Academy to reduce costs, improve outreach and make services more accessible;
- Investigate equipping firefighters and police officers with Global Positioning System receivers on their gear or vehicles to heighten on-the-job safety and responsiveness. The technology would speed rescue efforts if personnel were to become injured during the difficult and often disorienting conditions that are part of many incidents. The technology also would route assistance to the public more rapidly by hastening police response times and honing operational efficiencies;
- Press for a full consolidation of the Allen County and City of Fort Wayne public safety communications functions. Henry is committed to building consensus and finding a resolution to this life-threatening situation symbolized by the glass wall that separates both dispatch centers;
- Make the application of proven, cost-effective technologies a guiding principle and priority goal throughout all public safety departments;
- Endorse the continuation of the take-home police car program to keep officers visible in neighborhoods and closer to the people they serve;
- Implement the Safe House program, a network of designated, short-term safe haven locations for children in troubling situations, across the city; and
- Work with education officials to develop and implement programs that encourage and prepare the next generation of students for training at the Public Safety Academy, and guarantee expertly qualified first responders to fill these crucial community positions.

“Knowledge, training and technology save lives,” stated Henry. “There is no margin for error in emergency response. Talented professionals, the Public Safety Academy, citywide broadband, technological readiness, educational excellence and a strong community spirit: these are our assets. My public safety recommendations will build on our community’s strengths to make Fort Wayne a safer city, a welcoming home and one primed to compete worldwide.”

Tom Henry is the Democratic candidate for Mayor of Fort Wayne. He is a successful business owner, a five-term Fort Wayne City Councilman and a nonprofit leader with deep roots in the community.

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