

Chapter No. 2038

15/HR31/R1794

DC / CST

***HOUSE  
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION  
No. 60***

Originated in House



Clerk

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 60

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE LIFE AND EXTRAORDINARY LEGACY OF SECOND LIEUTENANT WELLINGTON G. IRVING FOR COURAGEOUSLY SACRIFICING HIS LIFE FOR THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND RECOGNIZING HIM FOR HIS SERVICE AND BRAVERY TO THIS GREAT NATION.

WHEREAS, a native of Belzoni, Mississippi, Second Lieutenant Wellington G. Irving distinguished himself as a fearless Tuskegee Airman in the 301st Fighter Squadron, part of the 332nd Fighter Group of the United States Army Air Corps, when he nobly gave his life to protect his fellow airmen; and

WHEREAS, Second Lieutenant Irving was filled with nothing but heart and temerity, yet near Kempten, Germany, on July 18, 1944, while he was flying support, a poisonous swarm of 25 to 30 enemy planes robbed him of his life, but not before his gallantry and indomitable valor allowed him to engage the fanatical hostile force in a dog fight that would ultimately leave the whereabouts of Second Lieutenant Irving unknown forever; and

WHEREAS, a graduate of flight training school on December 5, 1943, at Tuskegee Army Air Field in Tuskegee, Alabama, Second

Lieutenant Irving became the Black Fighter Pilot from Belzoni, Mississippi, and a proud pilot with the Tuskegee Airmen, who were a dedicated and determined group of young men that enlisted to become America's first African-American military airmen, at a time when many people mistakenly thought that African American men lacked intelligence, skill, courage and patriotism; and

WHEREAS, in February 1944, deployed to Ramitelli, Italy, with the 301st Fighter Squadron, part of the 332nd Fighter Group, which conducted long-range heavy bomber escort missions for the 15th Strategic Air Force, Second Lieutenant Irving, honored to display his skill and determination, helped set the stupendous record of African American airmen in World War II, who each possessed exponential amounts of intelligence, skill, courage and patriotism and whose names will forever live in hallowed memory; and

WHEREAS, Second Lieutenant Irving was only 11 days away from celebrating his 24th birthday when he sacrificed his life protecting the great United States of America, joining the ranks of an elect fraternity of soldiers who patriotically crossed the chilling rivers of Jordan for the freedoms all Americans enjoy; and

WHEREAS, as a Tuskegee Airman in the 332nd Fighter Group, Second Lieutenant Irving was an integral pilot sent to escort bombers to Memmingen in southern Germany, but when the sixty-six P-51 Mustang pilots arrived at the rendezvous point, the bombers they were supposed to escort had not arrived, so the fighter

pilots circled the area, but once they spotted the bombers, 30 sinister enemy planes, ready to rumble, were also threatening on the horizon; and

WHEREAS, to protect the bombers from attack, more than 20 of the P-51 pilots zoomed towards the venomous Messerschmitt 109s to break up the attack, and the rest of the fighters continued to escort the bombers toward the target; and

WHEREAS, when the escort mission was about 25 miles away from their destination, near Kempten, Germany, 30 more planes of the ruthless foe were imminent, and when four of those enemy planes attacked the bombers, four of the tenacious and resolute P-51 pilots, Second Lieutenant Irving and his wingman, Lieutenant Stanley L. Harris, First Lieutenant Joseph P. Gomer and Lieutenant Gene C. Browne, catapulted their planes toward the villain to counter the attacks and deliver an injurious shower of fire; and

WHEREAS, the last time Lieutenant Harris saw Second Lieutenant Irving, he was attacking the enemy in a selfless display of intrepidity, fearlessly diving on top of a ruinous formation of about 30 FW-190s, and it was in the ensuing turmoil that Lieutenant Harris lost sight of him; and

WHEREAS, Second Lieutenant Irving and Lieutenant Browne were later reported missing, and while Browne was captured and spent the rest of the war behind enemy lines at a prisoner of war camp, Second Lieutenant Irving, a man from an ordinary background but, with his perseverance and prowess, achieved extraordinary results,

was never seen again, so appropriately, a grave marker on his behalf has been placed at the Vicksburg National Cemetery, so that all may know of his unwavering bravery; and

WHEREAS, Second Lieutenant Irving's unflinching courage and gallant self-sacrifice reflect lasting glory upon himself and uphold the noble traditions of the infantry and military service; and

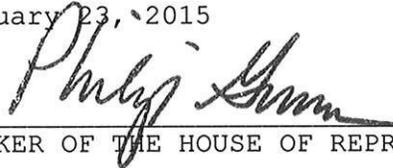
WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to honor heroic Mississippians such as Second Lieutenant Wellington G. Irving for remarkable dedication and altruism to the United States of America, the State of Mississippi and the people of Belzoni, who are eternally appreciative, for without Irving, the freedom they know and love would not be possible:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby commend the life and extraordinary legacy of Second Lieutenant Wellington G. Irving for courageously sacrificing his life for the United States of America and recognizing him for his service and bravery to this great nation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be

furnished to the family of Second Lieutenant Wellington G. Irving  
and to the members of the Capitol Press Corps.

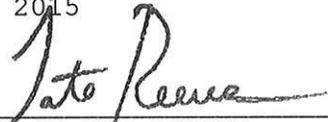
ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
February 23, 2015



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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE  
March 2, 2015



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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE