

1 SJR13
2 115280-2
3 By Senator Little (T)
4 RFD:
5 First Read: 12-JAN-10

1 SJR13

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4 ENROLLED, SJR13,

5 MOURNING THE DEATH OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL (RETIRED)

6 HAROLD R. DECKER.

7

8 WHEREAS, it is with a sense of inconsolable loss

9 that news is received of the death of an American hero,

10 Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Harold R. "Hal" Decker of Auburn,

11 Alabama, on August 29, 2009, at the age of 92 years; and

12 WHEREAS, born December 29, 1916, he graduated from

13 Northeast Missouri State Teachers College in 1940 and taught

14 commercial subjects in Missouri for a year before answering

15 the call of his country and entering the Armed Forces; after

16 flight training, the young pilot was assigned to the North

17 African Theater; on January 31, 1943, his plane was shot down

18 and landed on the mudflats near Gabes, Tunisia, where he was

19 captured by German forces, transported to Europe as a prisoner

20 of war, and confined for a total of 810 days in the notorious

21 Stalag Luft III; and

22 WHEREAS, at great risk, he became part of the

23 prisoners' dauntless "X" committee that was responsible for

24 secret activities, and he managed to operate a clandestine

25 radio to monitor the BBC war news, thereby bolstering morale

1 until the camp was liberated in April 1945 by the forces of
2 General George Patton; he was awarded the Bronze Star for his
3 courageous actions; and

4 WHEREAS, after the war he remained in the service
5 and subsequently earned a Master's Degree in the
6 Business-Engineering Management Program at the University of
7 Pittsburgh; upon retirement from the United States Air Force,
8 he joined the faculty at Auburn University, where he was a
9 highly esteemed teacher for 14 years, retiring in 1979 as
10 Associate Professor Emeritus of Aerospace Engineering; and

11 WHEREAS, he leaves to mourn his death his beloved
12 wife of 64 years, Lura Ann Renie Decker; three children and
13 their spouses, Steve Decker and wife, Sue; Susan Sneed and
14 husband, Allen, and John Decker and wife, Linda; six
15 grandchildren, Gretchen, Josh, Kim, Mike, Melanie, and Jack;
16 two great-grandchildren, Alden and Agatha; two brothers,
17 Warren and Bill Decker; and a legion of friends and admirers;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, Lieutenant Colonel Decker exemplified the
20 concept of servant leadership, and his far-reaching community
21 contributions included work with the Boy Scouts, Kiwanis, Red
22 Cross, and Village Christian Church; now therefore,

23 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH
24 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That the death of Lieutenant
25 Colonel (Retired) Harold R. Decker is recorded with deep

1 sadness, and this resolution is offered in highest tribute to
2 his inspirational life along with heartfelt sympathy to his
3 family.

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President and Presiding Officer of the Senate

Speaker of the House of Representatives

SJR13
Senate 12-JAN-10
I hereby certify that the within Senate Joint Resolution
originated in and was adopted by the Senate.

McDowell Lee
Secretary

House of Representatives
Adopted: 14-JAN-10

By: Senator Little (T)