

House Resolution 1206

By: Representatives Ehrhart of the 36th, Brockway of the 102nd, Gasaway of the 28th, Lumsden of the 12th, Reeves of the 34th, and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing and commending Georgia Tech alumnus John Boyd for his service to our nation
2 and his contributions to the military, business, and educational theory and strategy of our
3 nation; and for other purposes.

4 WHEREAS, John Boyd was born on January 23, 1927, in Erie, Pennsylvania, and graduated
5 from the University of Iowa with a bachelor's degree in economics in 1951 and a bachelor's
6 degree in industrial engineering from Georgia Tech in 1963; and

7 WHEREAS, he served in the United States Army Air Forces from 1945 to 1947 and, after
8 graduating from the University of Iowa, served as an officer in the United States Air Force
9 from 1951 until his retirement as a colonel in 1975; and

10 WHEREAS, after a short tour in Korea as a F-86 fighter pilot, he was assigned to the
11 prestigious United States Air Force Fighter Weapons School, where he became the head of
12 the academic section and developed and wrote the first and defining tactics handbook for
13 fighter pilots which became the textbook for fighter pilots everywhere; and

14 WHEREAS, while at the United States Air Force Fighter Weapons School, he was given the
15 nickname "Forty Second Boyd" for his standing bet that, beginning from a position of
16 disadvantage with his opponent on his tail, he could defeat the opponent in 40 seconds or
17 less, a bet that he never lost; and

18 WHEREAS, while at Georgia Tech, he began developing his theories regarding the design
19 of fighter aircraft and developed a totally new manner of designing fighter aircraft known as
20 the energy-maneuverability theory of aerial combat which led directly to the designs of the
21 F-15, F-16, and F/A-18 fighter aircraft and remains the basic design theory today in the
22 development of fighter aircraft; and

23 WHEREAS, he delved into military strategy and decision making theory and was highly
24 influential in designing the basic attack strategy used in the Gulf War of 1991 and later
25 inspired a rewrite of the basic tactics manual of the United States Marine Corps with regard
26 to maneuver warfare; and

27 WHEREAS, his research in decision making theory led to his concepts regarding the OODA
28 loop, which revolutionized how the military as well as business organizations operated,
29 emphasizing a highly decentralized chain of command that utilizes objective-driven orders
30 rather than method-driven orders to harness the mental capacity and creative abilities of
31 individual commanders or leaders at each level; and

32 WHEREAS, his theories on education and creativity broke new ground in that they
33 recognized that the key to survival and autonomy is the ability to adapt to change, not perfect
34 adaptation to existing circumstances, and that radical uncertainty is a necessary precondition
35 of physical and mental vitality in that all new opportunities and ideas spring from some
36 mismatch between reality and ideas about it, as examples from the history of science,
37 engineering, and business illustrate; and

38 WHEREAS, John Boyd was the epitome of the type of person that he encouraged people to
39 be, an individual who did not worry about being a somebody, but rather a somebody who did
40 something meaningful; and

41 WHEREAS, he received the prestigious Harold Brown Award by the United States Air Force
42 upon his retirement in 1975, which is the highest award given by the United States Air Force
43 to a scientist or engineer who applies scientific research to solve a problem critical to the
44 needs of the Air Force; and

45 WHEREAS, John Boyd lost his battle with cancer in 1997 and was buried with full military
46 honors at Arlington National Cemetery; and

47 WHEREAS, it is abundantly fitting and proper that the outstanding accomplishments of this
48 extraordinary Georgia Tech alumnus be appropriately recognized.

49 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
50 the members of this body recognize and commend John Boyd for his many and significant
51 contributions to our nation's military, business, and educational theories and strategies.

52 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
53 and directed to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to the
54 family of John Boyd.