

1 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 18

2 INTRODUCED BY J. FULLER, J. WELBORN

3
4 A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF
5 MONTANA HONORING THE MONTANA 163RD INFANTRY REGIMENT; AND DECLARING MARCH 5, 2023,
6 AS THE OFFICIAL DATE OF THE RECOGNITION OF THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MONTANA 163RD
7 INFANTRY REGIMENT'S VICTORY IN THE BATTLE OF SANANANDA, PAPUA, NEW GUINEA.

8
9 WHEREAS, Montana's 163rd Infantry Regiment, 41st Infantry Division, known as the Jungleers, was
10 called to active duty on September 16, 1940, for 1 year of training; and

11 WHEREAS, the largest ever mobilization of American military manpower continued, ultimately calling
12 up over 15 million U.S. men and women to serve from 1941 to the end of the hostilities in 1946; and

13 WHEREAS, over 75,000 Montanans were part of that force; and

14 WHEREAS, between January 1 and 23, 1943, Montana's 163rd Infantry Regiment was the first U.S.
15 unit to defeat the Imperial Japanese forces in the Battle of Sanananda, Papua, New Guinea; and

16 WHEREAS, on February 22, 1943, for only the second time in Montana's history, the 28th Montana
17 Legislature passed a joint resolution in a patriotic and historic move, honoring and recognizing the sacrifices of
18 Montana's 163rd Infantry Regiment and including an emblem of a now famous color sketch in tribute to the
19 soldiers by Montana artist Irwin "Shorty" Shope; and

20 WHEREAS, January 23, 2023, marked the 80th anniversary of the end of the Battle of Sanananda,
21 Papua, New Guinea, and it is befitting on such an anniversary to remember poignant excerpts from the
22 memorandum sent to New Guinea quoting Senate Joint Resolution No. 1:

23 "SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 1 A JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE VICTORIES OF
24 MONTANA INFANTRY REGIMENT, U.S.A., EXPRESSING THE GRATITUDE OF THE PEOPLE OF
25 MONTANA TO THE REGIMENT AND PROVIDING A CABLE MESSAGE FROM THE LEGISLATURE TO THE
26 REGIMENT IN THE COMBAT ZONE OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC THEATER OF WAR.

27 WHEREAS, the official military reports emanating from General Douglas MacArthur's Head-quarters in
28 the South Pacific, as released by the War Department's and the news dispatches cabled by observers, making

1 manifest that the 163rd Infantry--Montana's own--has been of imperishable fame in the jungles and on the
2 heights of New Guinea in most arduous combat against a implacable foe, and has from the very outbreak of
3 hostilities demonstrated the finest attributes of the American soldier, in devotion to training, fraternization and
4 cooperation with free peoples of the great Pacific world to the south, and in the deep resolve to establish the
5 rule of law among the nations of the earth.

6 The heart of all the people of Montana, while vibrant with affection for the Regiment, are burdened with
7 pain at its losses, and determined to repay the holy obligation resulting from their sacrifices, by solemnly
8 assuming the responsibility of free men in support of the reign of law throughout the earth.

9 NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Senate of the twenty-eighth Legislative Assembly of
10 the State of Montana, the House of Representatives concurring, that the Legislative Assembly tenders to every
11 officer and to every man of the 163rd Infantry Regiment the deep gratitude of the whole body of our citizens for
12 the great victory which our men have won, purchased with the blood of their bravest, hopeful that the Regiment
13 will accept this expression as an evidence of the love and devotion which we have for it, and which sustains us
14 on the home front and inspires us to dedicate each day to aid our men overseas.

15 That we ask the Commanding Officer of the Regiment, when the Regiment is placed in his hands, to
16 communicate the continuing homage of Montana people to General Douglas MacArthur, whose father, General
17 Arthur MacArthur, led the Montana Regiment of 1899 to a victory that brought freedom to the Philippines who
18 have proved their brotherhood with us and with whose help General Douglas MacArthur as his father's
19 successor, and with the aid of our Regiment, will restore those peoples of thieves of the Pacific to the dignity of
20 men.

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the following message be cabled at once, through military or other
22 appropriate channels, to the Commander of the 163rd Infantry Regiment in the combat zone:

23 WITH VIBRANT ADMIRATION FOR YOUR MAGNIFICENT VICTORY OVER THE JAPANESE ON
24 THE PAPUAN PENINSULA OF NEW GUINEA AND ELSEWHERE, WITH PRAYERS OF THE WOUNDED
25 AND WITH UNDYING RESOLVE TO CARRY THE HIGH PURPOSE OF OUR NOBLE DEAD, THE HEARTS
26 OF THE PEOPLE OF MONTANA ARE WITH YOU AS ONE EVERY HOUR OF EVERY DAY, THE TWENTY-
27 EIGHTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MONTANA IN SESSION AT HELENA. /s/ Earnest T. Eaton, President
28 of the Senate & /s/ Gee W. O'Conner, Speaker of the House"; and

1 WHEREAS, the resolution was approved on March 5, 1943, by Sam C. Ford, Governor, and
2 transmitted by memorandum and telegram to Montana's 163rd Infantry Regiment in which it was distributed
3 along with a special commemorative personalized print of the Capitol and the General Meagher Statue to every
4 member of the regiment by the Adjutant of the 163rd Infantry Regiment by Captain James R. Kent, by order of
5 the Regimental Commander, Colonel Jens Doe, later the Commander of the 41st Division; AND

6 WHEREAS, IN FEBRUARY 2002, MEMBERS OF THE MONTANA 163RD INFANTRY REGIMENT WERE MOBILIZED
7 TO BOSNIA IN SUPPORT OF OPERATION JOINT FORGE, WHERE THEY WERE TASKED WITH PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS
8 ACROSS WAR-TORN BOSNIA AND EXECUTED THIS MISSION FLAWLESSLY, REPRESENTING MONTANA IN AN EXEMPLARY
9 FASHION; AND

10 WHEREAS, IN JUNE 2004, THE MONTANA 163RD INFANTRY REGIMENT WAS MOBILIZED AS PART OF THE
11 116TH BRIGADE TO DEPLOY TO NORTHERN IRAQ IN SUPPORT OF OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM III, PARTICIPATING IN AN
12 ARDUOUS 6-MONTH POST-MOBILIZATION TRAINING AT FORT POLK, LOUISIANA, AND FORT BLISS, TEXAS, BEFORE
13 HEADING FOR THE DESERTS OF IRAQ, WHERE THEY FACED A HARSH CLIMATE AND CONSTANT ALTERCATIONS WITH
14 TERRORISTS DURING THE CHALLENGING 12-MONTH TOUR, BUT RESULTED IN THE 163RD INFANTRY REGIMENT BEING
15 RECOGNIZED WITH THE VALOROUS UNIT CITATION; AND

16 WHEREAS, IN SEPTEMBER 2010, THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE MONTANA 163RD INFANTRY REGIMENT WERE
17 AGAIN CALLED UPON FOR ANOTHER MOBILIZATION TO THE DESERTS OF IRAQ FOR OPERATION NEW DAWN IN SOUTHERN
18 AND CENTRAL IRAQ, WHERE THEY SPENT NEARLY 9 MONTHS ESCORTING LOGISTICAL CONVOYS AROUND THE ENTIRE
19 COUNTRY, AND AFTER RETURNING HOME, THEIR EFFORTS WERE RECOGNIZED WITH THE MERITORIOUS UNIT CITATION;
20 AND

21 WHEREAS, IN NOVEMBER 2021, THE SOLDIERS OF THE MONTANA 163RD INFANTRY REGIMENT WERE
22 REORGANIZED INTO TASK FORCE GRIZ AND MOBILIZED IN SUPPORT OF OPERATION SPARTAN SHIELD, WHERE AFTER A
23 POST-MOBILIZATION TRAINING AT FORT BLISS, TEXAS, THEY HEADED TO KUWAIT TO SERVE AS A READY RESPONSE
24 FORCE FOR U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND, WHERE FOR A YEAR TASK FORCE GRIZ SUPPORTED OPERATIONS IN IRAQ,
25 KUWAIT, SYRIA, SAUDI ARABIA, AND MANY OTHER COUNTRIES ACROSS THE REGION, INCLUDING EXECUTING NUMEROUS
26 TRAINING EXERCISES WITH NATO PARTNERS.

27
28 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF

1 THE STATE OF MONTANA:

2 That the Legislature does hereby honor our Montana 163rd Infantry Regiment veterans, their families,
3 and all those who supported our nation's efforts to right a wrong and restore peace through strength from 1940
4 to 1946, expending time, talent, and sacrifice to include the ultimate sacrifice in support of freedom.

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Legislature declares March 5, 2023, as the official date of
6 recognition of the 80th Anniversary of the Montana 163rd Infantry Regiment's victory of the Battle of
7 Sanananda, Papua, New Guinea.

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of State send a copy of this resolution to the
9 Governor, the Department Commander of the American Legion of Montana, the State Commander, the State
10 Senior Vice Commander, the State Junior Vice Commander, and the State Adjutant/Quartermaster of the
11 Veterans of Foreign Wars of Montana, the State Commander of the Disabled American Veterans of Montana,
12 the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, each of the federally recognized tribal governments in Montana, and each
13 member of the Montana Congressional Delegation.

14 - END -