



A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA RECOGNIZING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE END OF WORLD WAR II (1941 TO 1946) AND MONTANA'S VETERANS OF THAT WAR.

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

WHEREAS, on the same day the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 introduced the first peacetime conscription for men between the ages of 21 and 35 in United States history; and

WHEREAS, on March 11, 1941, United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt established the Lend Lease Act, allowing Britain, China, and other allied nations to purchase military equipment and to defer payment until after the war; and

WHEREAS, in August 1941, President Roosevelt signed an extension of service of 6 months for those Americans who had been called up in 1940; and

WHEREAS, on December 7, 1941, the United States came under attack by Japanese forces at Pearl Harbor and locations throughout the Pacific; and

WHEREAS, on December 8, 1941, the United States declared war on Japan; and

WHEREAS, on December 11, 1941, Germany and Italy declared war on the United States. The United States reciprocated and declared war on Germany and Italy; and

WHEREAS, the largest ever mobilization of American manpower continued, ultimately calling up over 15 million United States men and women to serve from 1941 to the end of hostilities in 1945; and

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

WHEREAS, over 6,000 women from Montana volunteered to serve in the various military services and auxiliary services in World War II to include the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, Women's Army Corps, Army

Nurse Corps, United States Navy Reserve (women's reserve), Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service, Women's Reserve of the Coast Guard, Women Airforce Service Pilots, Public Health Service, and the Cadet Nurse Corps; and

WHEREAS, many thousands of Native American men and women of Montana served in all major elements of the United States military during World War II with honor and great patriotism; and

WHEREAS, Montana Native Americans served as infantrymen, code talkers, air crewmen, nurses, and many other roles within the United States Army, Army Air Corps, United States Marine Corps, United States Navy, and the United States Coast Guard; and

WHEREAS, the 163rd Infantry Regiment, (Montana National Guard), 41st Infantry Division served with distinction at Fort Lewis, Washington, and various locations on the west coast of the United States until its departure to Australia in April 1942 as part of the Southwest Pacific Command, going on to fight in the Pacific Theater of World War II; and

WHEREAS, Montana's 163rd Infantry Regiment, 41st Infantry Division (Jungleers) was recognized as the first United States unit to defeat the Imperial Japanese Forces in the Battle of Sanananda, Papua New Guinea, in January 1943, subsequently being recognized by the 28th Montana Legislative Assembly by resolution and by a famous painting by Irwin "Shorty" Shope in April 1943; and

WHEREAS, the 163rd Infantry Regiment served in the Pacific Theater in three major campaigns; the Papuan Campaign 1943, winning the battles at Sanananda, Gona, and Kumsi River; the New Guinea Campaign 1944, winning the battles of Aitape, Wadke, and "Bloody" Biak; the Southern Philippines Campaign 1945, winning battles at Zamboanga, Sanga-sanga Island, and the Battle of Jolo and the key village of Calinan against seasoned Japanese land forces, stopping only because of the cessation of hostilities due to the dropping of atomic weapons at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and finally becoming an occupation force on the Japanese mainland; and

WHEREAS, the 163rd Infantry Regiment had over 230 members of Native Americans, representing eight tribal nations located in Montana, who fought with distinction as Jungleers; and

WHEREAS, the 163rd Infantry Regiment was demobilized in Japan on January 1, 1946, and sent home after over 5 years of active duty; and

WHEREAS, the First Special Service Force, a unique joint United States-Canadian special operations

force, was secretly formed at Fort William Henry Harrison near Helena, Montana, in April through July 1942, to organize and train for conduct of the mission known as Operation Plough; and

WHEREAS, the First Special Service Force went on to serve in both the Pacific Theater and the European Theater, with battle credits of the Aleutians Campaign 1943, Naples-Foggia Campaign 1943 to 1944, Naples-Foggia Campaign (Monte la Difensa, Remetanea, Sammucro, Radicosa, Majo, and Vischhiataro), Anzio Rome-Arno Campaign 1944, and were recognized as being the first unit into Rome on June 4, 1944. After helping secure the Holy City they went on to participate in the Southern France Campaign and the Rhineland Campaign, being inactivated December 5, 1944, at Villeneuve-Leobet (Menton), France, without losing a battle and with battle casualties equivalent to 137% of its strength; and

WHEREAS, the First Special Service Force members went on to serve as the 474th Infantry Regiment in Norway through the end of the European Conflict as well as storied units such as the 45th Infantry Division, marching onto Berlin; and

WHEREAS, the Camp Rimini War Dog Reception and Training Center was established in late 1942. Located west of Helena at a former Civilian Conservation Corps site, where over 800 dogs and their handlers trained as part of the effort to disrupt the Axis power, unit members went on to acquaint themselves in places along the Great Circle military air routes as search and rescue, providing specialized transport in the remote areas of the Northern Hemisphere such as Newfoundland, and in Europe during winter operations providing transport of war material to our American forces; and

WHEREAS, the Army Air Force organized and trained bomber forces throughout Montana at locations such as Great Falls, Lewistown, and Cut Bank from 1941 to 1945, training personnel in the use of heavy bombers, and were ultimately deployed to both the European and Pacific Theaters of war; and

WHEREAS, the 7th Ferrying Command, Air Transport Command, was formed at Great Falls (Gore Hill), now the Great Falls International Airport, and at East Base, Montana, now Malmstrom Air Force Base, and associated Army Air Corps bases to carry out the mission of providing aircraft and critical supplies to our allies over the Great Circle Route, a critical part of Global War Air Operations of World War II; and

WHEREAS, Fort Missoula became a World War II Italian detention camp after its Army garrison deployed to Alaska, housing Italian sailors who had been caught up in the war between 1942 and 1943, with the result being a well-disciplined and trustworthy population, some of whom went on to emigrate to the United

States; and

WHEREAS, specialized units such as the Black, segregated 555th Parachute Battalion, known as the Triple Nickels, trained and served in Montana at Missoula fighting forest fires throughout Montana and the northwest; and

WHEREAS, the people of Montana overwhelmingly supported World War II efforts in many ways on the home front, providing food and other strategic supplies and minerals, meeting or exceeding the quotas for the eight War Bond Drives; and

WHEREAS, Montanans supported, fought, died, and were wounded in all theaters of World War II. As Joseph Howard Kinsey wrote in his text, "High, Wide, and Handsome", of the more than 15 million men and women in the United States Armed Forces during "World War II, Montana furnished 75,000" to the effort. "Proportionately this was near the top of all states. In World War II, as in World War I, Montanans were quick to enlist and they were healthy; the proportion rejected because of physical defect was smaller than the national average." Further, the "Montana death rate in World War II was only exceeded by that of New Mexico in proportion to population. Montana [also] had the record of oversubscribing first in eight World War II saving bond drives."

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

That the Legislature does hereby recognize our Montana World War II generation, veterans, and families, and all those who supported our nation's efforts to right a wrong and restore peace through strength from 1940 to 1946, expending time, talent, and sacrifice to include the ultimate sacrifice in support of freedom.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Legislature supports the Spirit of '45 originally declared in July 2010 by an act of the United States Congress, and the recognition of the year 2020 as the 75th Anniversary of the end of World War II with Victory Europe occurring on May 7, 1945, and Victory Japan occurring on August 15, 1945, with the surrender of Japanese forces and the signing of surrender documents on September 2, 1945, on the USS Missouri, and ultimately World War II officially closed on December 31, 1946.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this date epitomizes the establishment and sustainment of one of Montana's most viable military veterans groups now identified as the Greatest Generation, and the Legislature

declares 2021 a special recognition of the sacrifices of Montanans in World War II.

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

- END -

I hereby certify that the within bill,
SJ 19, originated in the Senate.

Secretary of the Senate

President of the Senate

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2021.

Speaker of the House

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2021.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 19

INTRODUCED BY M. CUFFE

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