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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2013

HOUSE RESOLUTION

HONORING CAPTAIN LEWIS LOCKHART
FOR HIS HEROISM DURING WORLD WAR II

Introduced By: Representatives Martin, Gallison, Abney, Newberry, and Fox

Date Introduced: May 15, 2013

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, While in New Guinea during World War II, Captain Lewis Lockhart joined
2 the 39th Fighter Squadron, a group that was formed in WWI by flyers such as Jimmy Doolittle
3 and Eddie Rickenbacker; and

4 WHEREAS, Captain Lockhart endangered his life daily by flying through the 13,000 foot
5 peaks of the Owen Stanley Mountains in New Guinea to bomb and strafe the Japanese 9th Fleet
6 Headquarters on Kairiru Island; and

7 WHEREAS, The 39th Fighter Squadron cut off transport ships from mainland Japan and
8 totally destroyed Japanese planes and ships at Wewak, New Guinea; and

9 WHEREAS, Conditions became so bad for Japanese soldiers and sailors stationed on
10 Kairiru Island that they fantasized about food and painted chickens green to camouflage them
11 from the repeated air attacks by the 39th Fighter Squadron; and

12 WHEREAS, Captain Lockhart flew in some of the toughest combat cover missions in
13 Hollandia and Rabaul; and

14 WHEREAS, Captain Lockhart had to make an emergency landing in his P-38 after one of
15 his engines was destroyed in a combat mission over Rabaul; and

16 WHEREAS, Captain Lockhart flew as flight leader when the 39th covered a major
17 parachute drop in the Markham Valley, New Guinea; and

18 WHEREAS, Captain Lockhart led the bombing and strafing mission on May 27, 1944,
19 when 2nd Lt. Robert E. Thorpe was reported missing. Captain Lockhart and 2nd Lt. Fred Tobi went

1 looking for Lt. Thorpe in hazardous flying conditions when the entire squadron was grounded;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, Captain Lockhart flew as wingman when his squadron leader had to bail out
4 and escape from hostile natives in New Guinea, a story that was captured in the documentary,
5 “Injury Slight”; and

6 WHEREAS, Captain Lockhart flew a total of 171 combat missions in the P-38 and the P-
7 47; and

8 WHEREAS, As a testimony to Captain Lockhart’s heroic service to our nation during
9 World War II, he received the Air Medal with Two Oak Leaf Clusters; and

10 WHEREAS, The 39th Fighter Squadron, together with other units of the 5th Air Force, is
11 credited with preventing New Guinea, and probably Australia, from falling into Japanese hands
12 during the early years of the war in the Pacific; now, therefore be it

13 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island and
14 Providence Plantations hereby expresses our gratitude to Captain Lewis Lockhart for his service
15 to our nation during the darkest days of World War II; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That this House respectfully requests the Governor to honor Captain Lewis
17 Lockhart for his extraordinary heroism in the service of our nation, in particular for his efforts to
18 save 2nd Lt. Robert E. Thorpe, a Rhode Island hero who lost his life after flying a combat mission
19 for the 39th Fighter Squadron; and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
21 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to Governor Lincoln Chafee and Captain Lewis
22 Lockhart.

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